The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration

News Notes.

Anybody can keep a Diary, but not one in a million can do it so magically that the world in general is glad to start keeping it when he has finished. Without thinking twice, you would say no sort of literary work could be easier; it seems so easy that though experts have written handbooks on "How to Write Short Stories," "How to Write Novels," "How to Write Poetry," "How to Write Essays," none has thought the beginner could require instruction in "How to Keep a Diary." Yet if you add up the number of Diaries that have made their writers famous you will be surprised to find how few they are.

The fact is of course there is not and never will be any recipe for keeping a great Diary. Fanny Burney had considerable literary gifts, and her lively Diary is a joy for ever, but I do not find it more fascinating than the Diaries of Macready, the actor. William Allingham was something of an artist in literature, but his interesting Diary pales to insignificance, is as moonlight unto the sunlight, as water unto the wine of Pepys, and Pepys was artless even as a man of letters. There are Diaries whose interest is mainly historical; Diaries whose interest is mainly personal; but no great Diary in which the personal element does not predominate. A little while ago I heard of an old Diarist who lived in the manor house near a country village; she had started keeping a Diary in her girlhood, and was still diligently adding to it at the age of eighty. It was estimated to run to more than a million words, and covered the intimate life of the village for well over a century, for it opened by recording village stories the writer had gathered from her parents, grandparents and nurses, and so went back to days when the ducking-stool was reserved for scolding wives, when the stocks were in common use, and witches were feared and sometimes punished barbarously. As a minute record of the everyday life of that district I was assured it had real value, but it was so conventionally correct in style, so dull and verbose that it could not be read with pleasure, and was of use only as a reservoir from which the patient social historian

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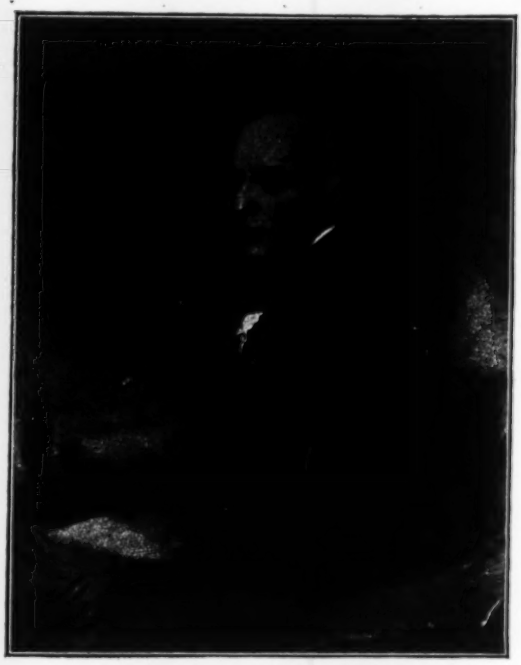
might dredge up facts about local manners, customs and ways of domestic life over a long period. It has never been published, and probably never will be. If the secrets of all households were known, there must be numerous Diaries of that kind being compiled to-day but, so far as the majority of us are concerned, they are written in vain, because their writers, having no personality of their own to impart to them, cannot make them vital for us.

We should be poorer if Scott or Emerson or Crabb Robinson had kept no Diary; but we should be much richer had Lamb and Henley and Stevenson kept Diaries, for it is impossible they could have withheld their personalities from them. If you could drain the personal element out of Pepys's it would not rank above the better written, more decorous Diary of Evelyn. An incorrigible egoist, Pepys allowed all his pride, vanity, meannesses, generosities, virtues, sins, to speak freely through his pen; nothing interested him more than himself and everything relating to himself; he was as insatiably curious about the private affairs of his obscure neighbours as about those of his most important contemporaries and the public affairs of the nation. He put his naked self into his Diary; betrayed his own secrets as unreservedly as he betrayed as many secrets concerning others as he could discover. He was a born gossip, a scandal-monger, and loved being that; he could keep nothing to himself, and stamped all his disclosures with his own eager, quaint, sagacious, foolish, vividly distinctive, perversely likeable personality. Having these qualifications, he did not merely embalm himself, his friends, acquaintance, and his times in his Diary, but has preserved them there wonderfully alive, with all the colour and pulse and warmth of life still glowing in them and in whatever they said or did.



Joseph Farington, R.A.

From a painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

In his Introduction to "The Farington Diary" (Hutchinson; 21s.), Mr. James Greig suggests that "Farington will in future rank with Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn," but I think he falls short of Pepys, though he may take his place with Evelyn. He had not the irrepressible individuality of the egregious Samuel; he was much more reticent, more mentally and morally respectable. When he tells you now and then of little scandals about this or that person he does not do it with any gusto, but coldly as a doctor might chronicle regrettable details of an interesting case; and he never tells you any scandals about himself. Probably there were none to tell, but his general tone and manner are impersonal, even when he is recording his own share in any transaction of business or seemly pleasure. There is no need to compare him with others; it is enough that his Diary is a valuable discovery, is full of fresh and entertaining gossip and stories of famous people, or people who were famous towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, and adds not a little to our knowledge of them and their times. Farington is fortunate in having so able and careful an editor as Mr. James Greig, whose arrangement of the Diary is admirable, and whose frequent foot-notes about persons it refers to are always interesting, and often more so than the Diary entries they supplement.

Dr. Johnson was dead before Farington began his record, but Boswell and Burke still lived and figure in his pages; and he is able to relate new anecdotes of Johnson, of Dr. Taylor, Beauclerc, and other of his circle. If you have formed an impression of Topham Beauclerc not only as a wit but as something of a dandy, it is rather disillusioning to read that Horace Walpole (Lord Orford) told Farington, "He was the worst tempered man he ever knew. Lady Di passed a most miserable life with him. Lord O——, out of regard to her, invited them to pass a few days at Strawberry Hill. They slept in separate beds. . . . Beauclerc was remarkably filthy in his person, which generated vermin. He took laudanum regularly in vast quantities. He seldom rose before one or two o'clock. His principal delight was in disputing on subjects that occurred; this he did acutely. Before he died he asked pardon of Lady Di, for his ill-usage of her."

Farington was a landscape painter and an R.A., and his Diary is naturally richer in art lore, in

intimate jottings about great and small artists and the doings and vicissitudes of the Royal Academy (in whose affairs he exercised extraordinary authority) than in stories of authors and politicians and the rest of the outer world. But his interests and his range of acquaintance were wide, and he can pass from private information about Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Hoppner, Raeburn, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Romney, Opie, Turner, Constable, and many another, to excellent talk of Fox, Pitt, Napoleon, Nelson and Lady Hamilton, George III and IV, Blake, Wordsworth, Rogers, Scott, Burns, Gibbon, Fanny Burney, Beckford—much that one is sorely tempted to quote, but space forbids.

Photo by Henry B. Goodwin. **Mr. Stacy Aumonier.**

"The Best Short Stories of 1922," edited by Edward O'Brien and John Cournos (Jonathan Cape), is dedicated to Mr. Aumonier, and eight of his are included in their list of the year's best stories.

There are all manner of sidelights on customs of the time; significant notes on the democratising influence in this country of the recent French Revolution, and grim reports of what happened during its darkest days in Paris. No theatre manager now pays an annuity of £100 to our leading journal "that His Play House may be well recommended in that paper"; and J. Taylor, dramatic critic of the *Morning Post*, would not have found a publisher to give him £40 for his volume of poems nowadays: nobody would now suggest that all R.A.'s should wear a uniform, but there is a quite familiar ring in the lament of the Marquess Themond, in 1801, when "He said He could not but think that England had seen her best days." The most poignant entries are those which picture Burke's terrible grief on the death of his son, though Burke's general character, as drawn by Farington, is not attractive. In conversation he was intolerant of other speakers, and "disregarding their remarks urges on whatever rises in his mind with an ardour peculiar to himself." Lord Inchiquin described him as "insolent, impatient of contradiction—will hear no argument." Which emphasises what we learn of him elsewhere and helps to explain why he had hosts of admirers but no friends.

Some have a notion that this aggressive self-assertiveness, this noisy, overbearing intolerance indicates that the blusterer has a tremendous personality; but it seems likelier that his personality does not really amount to much or he would not feel impelled to adopt those methods to make it apparent. Borrow insisted on himself in an uproarious fashion, but he had not half the personality of Lamb. Lamb's greater personality needed no bush, but if Borrow had not adopted his bullying pose I fancy we might have recognised he was just a raw human being whose conceit and studious eccentricities made him appear extraordinary, who happened to be fond of tramping and the gipsy life, and able to write of them picturesquely with something of creative power. A sense of humour would have moved him to laugh at his own absurdities and impertinences of conduct and behave more sensibly. If all the stories of him are true, life under the same roof with such a man must have been miserable and exasperating; there can have been no ease, no comfort in his society; he must have been a riotous nuisance to his friends and all who had anything to do with him. I will confess to a long suspicion that his apparently big personality was too largely a matter of sound and fury, and that we should find him no giant among giants if we could deprive him of all his noise. I still suspect that, after reading Mr. Thurston Hopkins's "George Borrow: Lord of the Open Road" (12s. 6d.; Jarrolds), and do not agree with him that Borrow was greater than his work. The undeniable thing about him personally is that he was provocative, odd, interestingly ridiculous, and these you will find him in Mr. Hopkins's book, which gives you a vivid study of his characteristics, a good, brief biography, a discussion of his books and their characters, and some capital new stories and reminiscences, amusing in their fresh revelation of his eccentricities but confirming the conviction that his real personality was less portentous than pretentious. Mr. Hopkins is a hero-worshipper, but not a blind one; he recognises that at least some of the warts on his idol are no beauty-spots, and his book, illustrated with a portrait and three etchings, is a well informed, attractively written introduction to Borrow and his works.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. F. Britten Austin,**

whose successful book of short stories, "On the Borderland" (Hurst & Blackett), was reviewed in last month's BOOKMAN

A book that is likely to create discussion, as disclosing something of the secret political history of the last century, is "The Vindication of Sir Bartle Frere," by Basil Worsfold, which will be published next month by Mr. Thornton Butterworth. It clears Frere's name as an administrator by printing for the first time a series of letters from Sir Michael

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Wilfrid Ewart.**

Hicks Beach, who was then Colonial Secretary.

"The Wrong Shadow," the romantic comedy of a successful chemist, by Harold Brighouse, will be published this month by Messrs. Chapman & Dodd.

In "Ships of the Royal Navy" (6s.; Sampson Low), Mr. Oscar Parkes has compiled a full list of the ships that make up the British Navy of to-day, and gives an account of their tonnage, speed, dimensions, armament, etc., and describes their characters and qualities lucidly and with expert knowledge. The book is a most complete work of reference on its subject, and is admirably illustrated with a hundred photographs.

The tragic death of Mr. Wilfrid Ewart in Mexico City, on New Year's Eve, ended what had promised to be a brilliant career. He was standing in a balcony looking down on a wild carnival procession when he was struck by a stray shot from a revolver. His two books, "The Way of Revelation" and "A Journey in Ireland" (both published by Messrs. Putnams), have won wide recognition from critics and the public, here and in America, the second as a wonderfully acute and impartial interpretation of latter-day Ireland, and "The Way of Revelation" as one of the most poignant and revealing of all the novels of the war.

Death has taken heavy toll in the world of letters these last few weeks, and we record with regret the passing of Mr. Frederic Harrison, whose life and work we hope to review at an early date; of Katherine Mansfield (Mrs. Middleton Murry), who is the subject of an article on another page; and of Mr. Ranger Gull, who had become better known by his pseudonym of "Guy Thorne." Perhaps his ablest novel was "The Serf," published some years ago in his own name; his most popular was "When It Was Dark," which created an extraordinary sensation in its time, and sold about half a million copies. We are asked to say that some of his friends are getting up a subscription which they wish to present to his wife, and that any who would care to add to this should communicate with Mr. Bohun Lynch, at the Savage Club, Adelphi Terrace, London, W.C.

Mr. E. Charles Vivian,
whose new novel, "City of Wonder," has just been published by Messrs. Hutchinson.

Photo by Advance Photo Co. **Mr. Hutton Mitchell.**

Having made two reputations—as a painter and as a black-and-white artist in the magazines — Mr. Hutton Mitchell is now setting out to make another as a novelist. His first novel, "The Deviations of Diana," which will be published early in the spring by Messrs. Philpot, is a realistic story of to-day, most of its scenes and characters being drawn from the literary and artistic life of London's picturesque Bohemia. Mr. Mitchell has drawn an unusual and striking design for the wrapper of his own book.

"An Outline of Literature and Art," under the joint editorship of Mr. John Drinkwater and Sir William Orpen, is to be issued in fortnightly parts by Messrs. Newnes, beginning on the second of this month. Starting with classical myths and legends, the "Outline" will give vivid studies of every great writer from Homer to Hardy and, in outline, an account of the literature of every country; a separate section being devoted to art, in which the same method will be followed and as many as possible of the greatest pictures of the world reproduced.

Mr. Cecil Roberts is better known as poet than as novelist, but he has at least one good novel to his credit and has written another, "Scissors," which Messrs. Heinemann are publishing next month. It deals with the changes that have come over social conditions in the last ten years, and not a few of its characters are drawn from living models. Mr. Roberts is at present engaged on a new novel, for which he gathered material during a recent visit to Italy.

To say nothing of the public, editors will bless the name of Mr. Low Warren. Henceforth, when they receive letters asking, How am I, or How is my son to set about becoming a journalist? they can, in the briefest note, refer applicants to Mr. Warren's "Journalism," which has just been published by Cecil Palmer (21s.), with an Introduction by Alan Pitt Robins. Nothing could be ampler or more practical. Mr. Warren writes out of over thirty years' experience as journalist and

Mr. Cecil Roberts.

editor, and from telling you the best way to begin, the essential qualifications to success, he gives you details of all that is to be known about every branch of journalism, from the duties of the apprentice and junior reporter to those of the editor and manager. There are chapters on free-lancing, on press photography, on women journalists, technical journalism—the whole ground is fully covered and incidentally you have a history of journalism, thoughts on its future and, scattered here and there all through, interesting and amusing anecdotes of great journalists of yesterday and to-day. An excellent book, whether you read it for information or solely for the good entertainment it affords.

THE BOOKMAN.

Every year *Who's Who* gets bigger and bigger and becomes, if that be possible, a more and more indispensable reference book in every well-equipped office. The 1923 edition (42s.; A. & C. Black) contains over thirty thousand biographies of men and women of distinction in every walk of public life. Its information, carefully brought up to date again, is concise but ample; both as a directory of celebrities and a dictionary of national contemporary biography it remains without a rival.

Mr. L. H. Myers,

whose remarkable novel, "The Orissers," is published by Messrs. Putnams. Mr. Myers is the son of F. W. Myers, the author of "Human Personality."

We have received from the Burke Publishing Company *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage* for 1923 (£6 6s.), a stout, handsomely produced volume, which claims to be the only one in the world that publishes a full and complete genealogy of every British family that now bears an hereditary title, and in addition accounts of all who bear titles that are not hereditary. The careful building up of this colossal work has been going on for so long that in five years Burke's will be celebrating its centenary. It is impossible here to summarise the immense variety of information it also furnishes concerning questions of precedence, Privy Councillors and collateral matters; it is enough to say that all its details are well and clearly arranged and the work maintains its high traditional standard of accuracy.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

KATHERINE MANSFIELD.

THEY knew nothing of her, they who assembled in the market-place. Nothing at all: a circumstance neither melancholy nor surprising, seeing how little the name Katherine Mansfield has signified to the larger proportion of readers themselves, some, moreover, suspected of individualism and discrimination. Since the autumn of 1920 her two best books have had publication, and in the corresponding period eight awards were made by adjudicators connected with this or that recognised body of people anxious to give emphasis in a practical manner to the worthiest imaginative literature by young English contemporaries. Katherine Mansfield's contribution, one might have thought, made her a likely candidate. "The *Genius* of Katherine Mansfield," was actually the title of an essay by Miss Storm Jameson printed in *Voices* two years ago. And a critic of *The Times* directed attention to a quality in her writing which has peculiar claims to immortality," and we know of none amongst Miss Mansfield's contemporaries whose claims are as good." The quality he spoke of was perfection. "There are stories by her which are not only perfect in themselves, but perfect in their genre." Alas, neither Miss Jameson nor *The Times* critic figured with the adjudicators! And as Katherine Mansfield was apparently unfortunate enough to have written and published during a time singularly rich in volumes of imaginative literature possessing that same quality of perfection, her work was passed over, so far as the premier prize was concerned, on every single occasion of those eight awards.

Well, the author of "Bliss, and Other Stories" and "The Garden Party, and Other Stories" will bring no further volumes to the judgment table of whimsical connoisseurs. The work which, in heroic conditions, she has been able to accomplish is now set aside as a whole to await the ultimate judgment, for the news of her sudden death came from Fontainebleau on January 9th. The mortality among literary personages has been disproportionate of late and sadly heavy, but while authors such as Mrs. Meynell and Frederic Harrison died in the fullness of years, Katherine Mansfield had counted no more than thirty-three. For some six of these her health was undermined by phthisis, and she has been obliged to live abroad since 1920.

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Probably her share in the renaissance of the short story in England has been greater than that of any of her contemporaries, although in the old days, before her life was darkened by suffering, she showed evidence of artistic vitality in many directions, *Rhythm* and *The New Age* being the chief medium of her expression in verse, criticism and the essay, as well as the short story. The first-named of these two periodicals was conducted by Mr. John Middleton Murry, who founded it with Mr. Michael Sadleir and a group of enthusiasts in the summer of 1911. The venture proved so successful that from a quarterly (in a grey wrapper), *Rhythm* was changed within a year to a monthly which, in its blue cover, is still remembered and sought after. Miss Mansfield's first contribution to *Rhythm* was a short story, "The Woman at the Store," which I remember now as I write, concluded at the top of a page which was filled in with my own first contribution, some lines of verse. Her early prose was hard, heavily detailed, and ruthless enough to be almost entirely devoid of the qualities that have enriched the work of her maturity. In 1911 she collected into volume-form a series of sketches which, appearing in the *New Age*, had caustically portrayed a German *pension* from the inside. Lately I read somewhere a disclaimer that Katherine Mansfield had been influenced by the Russian masters, an attempt being made at the same time to show that Jane Austen was her ancestress. Apart from the fact that there is no discredit in acknowledging an indebtedness during one's formative period to anyone except Mrs. Henry Wood, even a casual study of "In a German Pension" will reveal the extent to which Miss Mansfield worked under the spell of those Far Eastern giants. It is apparent also in the nature of her other *Rhythm* contributions. She made translations of the poetry of Boris Petrovsky:

Katherine Mansfield
(Mrs. Middleton Murry).

"Heavens above! here's an old tie of yours——
Sea-green dragons stamped on a golden ground.
Ha! Ha! Ha! What children we were in those days."

She wrote bizarre poems of her own, and more short stories, with curiously Russian settings. Her initials began to appear in the critical section of the magazine, and there she eventually spoke with authority, for she became associate editor with Mr. Murry, to whom later she was married. For her, as for her husband, *Rhythm* had been a rare literary training ground: when Mr. Murry became editor of the *Athenæum* in 1919, the reviews of fiction which appeared week by week over the signature "K.M." attracted wide attention for their wit, understanding and honesty. Some day those criticisms will be reprinted. I remember their author once dallying a little with the idea of volume-publication for a selection of them, but she eventually put it aside. And no wonder: the preparation of "Bliss, and Other Stories" was taking all her energy, and its success must have encouraged her greatly in the writing of the tales gathered last year into the volume entitled "The Garden Party."

In certain obituary notices great literary promise has been attributed to these two books. But each of them contains much of definite achievement also. The second collection, indeed, is mainly achievement, every story being as self-contained and self-complete as are the indefinite moods and deeds of human beings when considered from a certain artistic angle. Only one or two pieces in "Bliss" can be ranked with them: "The Pictures" is certainly one of these; "Je Ne Parle Pas Francais" is another, especially memorable to those few who had read it in the very limited edition printed at Mr. Murry's private printing press at Hampstead. "Prelude," in the same volume, was magnificently outdone by "At the Bay" in "The Garden Party."

How deceptive and fluctuating was the state of Katherine Mansfield's health during that later phase of her literary activities may be understood from the fact that while "Bliss" took two painful years to complete, "The Garden Party" was finished in six months. At one time she seemed to be making so much headway against the further advance of her illness that she returned to England. That was during September last, and in London and down at her new home in East Grinstead her friends made, unknowingly, their last farewells, for she grew alarmingly ill again in our treacherous climate and was driven back to the continent; and now, away hence, out of the reach of suffering and harsh circumstance, to other, viewless continents where for a brief while no mortal among us may follow. To her friends she has bequeathed a treasure most noble: not simply her books, and the letters written in exile, and the recollection of countless hospitable and affectionate hearthside meetings, but an exalted sense that they have been privileged to sojourn awhile in the presence of one who was among the saintliest of women. What she contributed to the art of the short story; what lovely and loving things she did for others; what lovableness, simplicity, tenderness and reverence were showing more and more in her work—all these matters will doubtless be spoken of some day, and, one hopes, befittingly.

THOMAS MOULT.

THE READER.

ERNEST RENAN.

By Anthony Clyne.

ON February 27th, a century ago, Ernest Renan was born in the sleepy town of Tréguier, on the coast of Brittany. George Sand did not care for Brittany because it was "all Celtic ruins and Catholicism," a distaste typical of the age. Renan was in temperament a genuine Breton, a dreamy, unworldly and serene Celt. His charm consists in the mingling of the gentle mysticism of the Celt with the sober accuracy of the French rationalist. He was a sentimental realist, a romantic sceptic. All through his life and character and writings runs this dualism, not as a confused discord or ineffectual neutrality, but as a complex harmony deepening and widening his understanding. He who insisted upon the employment of Reason, with unfaltering honesty and infinitely scrupulous care, for the discovery of the truth, was always speaking with tender admiration of Faith. It was his favourite word.

Ernest Renan.
From a painting by A. Scheffer, 1860.
In the collection of Madame Psichari
(Renan's daughter).

Renan's father, descendant of fisherfolk, was a poor mariner, "mild and melancholy," without much capacity for business, so that the family's affairs were not prosperous. Renan's mother was by blood half Breton, half Gascon, and in her temperament the Gascon element predominated—joyous, richly endowed with common sense. The Breton father was an ardent Republican, the Gascon mother a firm Royalist. As all through his life Renan was divided between the political principles of his father and those of his mother, so he inherited both his father's contemplative idealism and his mother's serene common sense. Everywhere in his life we perceive this dualism. "I am of two-fold nature," he said. "One part of me laughs, while the other weeps." As his father's son he listened eagerly to the grotesque yet gracious legends of Breton saints, and as his mother's son he discriminated between the possibly true and the certainly fictitious. When Ernest was five his father was drowned, returning one dark night in his coasting vessel from the quay of St. Malo. Then his fifteen-year-old sister, Henriette, a soul of sublime courage, assumed liability for her father's debts and became the real head of the family. For twenty years she worked for them. Between Ernest and Henriette existed infinite affection and perfect confidence. She paid his school fees until he won a scholarship, and to her he turned always as a young man for sympathy and guidance.

All this and much more we learn from that fascinating fragment of autobiography, "Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse." We can see that there occurred no revolutionary changes in his nature, but evolution in the strict sense of the word, an unfolding of what had always been present, if hidden and in germ. The venerable priests of the seminary might describe him in their reports as "docile, patient, diligent"; but beneath the surface he had an uneasy doubt of the sufficiency of their instruction and was entirely aware of the inefficiency of their methods. Winning all the prizes of his class when he was fifteen, he was sent for by the director of a Paris ecclesiastical college, recruiting youths of promise destined for the priesthood. At fifteen, then, this provincial lad goes to Paris, as if "suddenly flung into France from Tahiti or Timbuctoo." He passes through the commonest suburbs as a sort of legendary Holy Land. As one commentator points out, he does not see the convict prison at Poissy, ignores the asylum at unsavoury Nanterre, but exclaims passionately, "*Nanterre, la Patrie de Ste. Geneviève! Poissy, le Pays de St. Louis!*" Everything was radiant with magic glamour, or else painfully incomprehensible. Everything was different, even religion. Of Brittany his last memory was "the pious chimes of the evening Angelus, spreading from parish to parish, infusing into the atmosphere something of calmness, of sweetness, of melancholy." But the glittering, superficial, ingenious Catholicism of the capital alienated him—"a religion of calico-print, a piety scented with musk, decked out with ribbons." From an impulse we can well understand, a desperate resolution to preserve the austere faith of his childhood, his personal piety became more fervent and he tried to become absorbed in devout observances. It was vain. During the seven years of his training his uneasiness increased. A terrible conflict raged within the young man's heart, between devotion to the Church and the changed opinions he had formed of its doctrines, between fear of grieving his mother and all his friends and complete honesty, a conflict that is revealed by flashes of vehement perplexity in his letters, though he never lost the appearance of serene peace. His sister encouraged him to obey his conscience, and when the decision was taken she sent him out of her hoarded savings 1,200 francs, for he was left without means of support.

Renan, twenty-two years old, found a modest post as usher in a school, was paid no salary, taking his meals with the scholars, his duties occupying scarcely two hours in the evening. Among the scholars was Berthelot, the famous chemist, already passionately devoted to science. A friendship of the closest intimacy sprang up between the two, to endure all their lives. Renan talked to Berthelot of his Semitic studies, to which his days were given up. Berthelot revealed to Renan a new world, the world of natural science. Renan seized upon its certitudes, its principles founded upon

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data derived from experiment and direct observation, with avidity. Philology, literature, history he had studied; learning he possessed. This was the knowledge for which he had unconsciously craved. But always we perceive the dualism of his nature. For he welcomed the scientific revelation with unscientific enthusiasm. Ever afterwards he was filled with wonder of the world, but the wonder of a mystic. Meanwhile his studies brought him distinction. In 1847 he won the Prix Volney for a philological essay with a paper, expanded seven years later into his great "General History and Comparative System of the Semitic Languages." The same year he passed brilliantly the examination which made him Fellow of the University of Paris.

Ernest Renan
(1823-1892).

But 1848 was the year of revolution. Events in France and throughout Europe profoundly impressed him. Again he was confronted by a new revelation, a world of which his seminary studies, his philology, his eager absorption of scientific principles had taught him nothing—the world of politics. The ideal of Democracy he ardently embraced, and he composed a huge treatise, "The Future of Science," not published until forty years later, setting forth with eloquence his scheme for remaking society. Rejecting the panacea of the equalisation of wealth, he would have it considered of secondary importance and culture of supreme value. How to reconcile an aristocracy of culture with the rights of the mass of men—that was a problem which perplexed him ever afterwards. By this time his contributions to periodicals were attracting attention. The Government sent him on a mission of exploration among all the libraries of Italy. But all his time was not spent in libraries. Again a new revelation came to him, a world opened out before him of which he had hitherto learned nothing—the world of art.

Returning to Paris, he and his sister Henriette took a little house, living upon his small salary from the National Library and her savings, devoting their evenings to literature. She assisted him by copying his manuscripts, compiling materials, criticising—and wisely—his style. For the journals he wrote those charming essays, later collected in "Studies of Religious History" and "Ethical and Critical Essays," and in 1852 was published the book that first brought him fame as a philosopher, "Averroès and Averroïsm." In 1856 he was in a position to marry. Henriette sadly submitted to sharing him with another, and remained with the pair. She accompanied him to Syria in 1861, and there she died of a fever. He too was struck down, and was taken back to France to recover slowly.

Henriette had bidden him write the "Life of Jesus." They had commenced it together in the Holy Land. In 1863 it appeared. It perfectly displays that vivifying vision without any surrender of scrupulous science which is the peculiar quality of his writings. It is the product of a poet and an artist as much as of a diligent and profound scholar. To his vast knowledge of manuscripts and authorities was added a sense of the landscape of the story, derived from personal knowledge of the scenery of the Holy Land, and a wonderful understanding of the life of the people—the life of the synagogue, the village, the fields, the olive groves, the fishing-boats on the lake, and the Jerusalem of the Herods. There followed "The Apostles" and "St. Paul." The theological implications of Renan's writings are not for discussion here. Indeed it is not for them, not for his contributions to Biblical theories, that he is to be accounted among the greatest in French literature, but for the delicate skill, the combination of profound learning and human sympathy, of scrupulous accuracy and true romance, of science and poetry, with which he illuminates the past. Nothing could excel the ingenuity with which he supplies the gaps in the records of the age of which he wrote, to furnish a coherent, consistent and graphic panorama of an ancient and alien land. The persons who appear in his pages are neither mere mouthpieces arranged dexterously to utter the set Biblical speeches, nor the conventional figures of a church window. They are flesh and blood realities, living and breathing men.

Of his later writings there is no space to speak, except briefly. The war of 1870, and especially the Commune, converted his Liberalism into a gospel of monarchy, of conscription and thorough internal reform, of a patriotic aristocracy controlling an obedient multitude. He was disillusioned. The sceptic triumphed over the romantic, the enthusiast. One can perceive the process of disenchantment in his writings, though there is no diminution in their consummate skill, their literary art. Flashes of mordant irony were more frequent. There was no Henriette to check, as she used to do, the satire that wounds and is meant to wound. But from this temporary overclouding he emerged again, and in the last sections of his "Origins of Christianity" he is again serene and confident, again, as Taine said, "the sceptic who stuffs the empty spaces of his scepticism with something mystic." At sixty he published that account of his childhood and youth which in France, at any rate, is next in popularity to his "Life of Jesus." Having completed the immense "Origins of Christianity," he commenced with unabated industry a great "History of Israel," the last volumes appearing after his death.

SOME PLAYS OF ALFRED SUTRO.

By GRAHAM SUTTON.

I HEARD great things of Mr. Sutro's double-event: I read congratulatory notices: I received announcements and tickets for "The Laughing Lady," and almost immediately afterwards for "The Great Well": I was enthusiastic in anticipation. And then my conscience, hanging like Launcelot Gobbo's about the neck of my heart, reproached me that I had regarded Mr. Sutro as a pre-war dramatist; and before visiting "The Laughing Lady" I took down a few of his old successes from their top shelf to secure a perspective.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Alfred Sutro.**

To read a dramatist *en masse* is always interesting and often instructive; it brings out his private tastes and public method; in Mr. Sutro's case it throws much light on the concensus of critical opinion about his two latest plays. "Well made," "construction," "technical skill"—these are the critical chorus: as they well may be. For Mr. Sutro served his apprenticeship in a strict school. Twenty odd years ago, when he began play-making, the first requisite of drama was that it should be well constructed, as Sardou had defined construction. Young Sutro took the lesson to heart; technique came first with him, and the rest nowhere. Read "Women in Love," a volume of one-act plays first published in 1902, if you would see the manner of his apprenticeship—cold, clockwork little things they are, constructed quite obviously as a mere exercise in making the wheels go round; then turn to a later volume of one-acters—"Little Plays," 1912—and note the development. "Aren't we just now on the rim of the world?" says Lady Torminster. "Aren't we a little more than ourselves—aren't we almost on the other side of things?" This is as true of the book generally as of these characters in particular. No one in "Women in Love" could possibly have talked like that. But now the mechanical apprenticeship is over; the foundation has been truly laid; the dry bones begin to live.

Meanwhile "The Walls of Jericho" in 1904 had scored a big success. Revived in the provinces a few years ago, it had a curiously old-fashioned flavour; "but of course, it is old stuff," one told oneself—and then remembered other plays of the same age that still seem dateless; the trouble being, I fancy, that when Mr. Sutro wrote "The Walls of Jericho" he was still thinking more in stage-technique than in human emotions. But he was also on the verge of a more dangerous pitfall—that very death-trap to all witty English dramatists, the comedy of manners. And here I must digress to Congreve, and to the spell which he has laid on certain comedy writers of our own age. Congreve drew Mirabel and Millamant for a specialised audience; while he wrote, the English theatre was run by and for a highly cultured clique, who were content to take wit like snuff, as an end in itself without moral associations; thus nurtured, comedy sparkled into a perfection that has been the ideal of all later wits—and their despair. For the English audience is no longer responsive to this kind of comedy: it is no longer capable of separating wit from morality: its imagination is like the villas it lives in—only semi-detached: it must have righteousness dragged in by the ears, or the play is damned. So that the modern playwright with an admiration for comedy of manners is like a man boxing with a broken thumb, he can't put his heart into the job—or rather, he has to put too much "heart" into it, at the expense of head. He may retain his wit to please himself, but he must ballast with romantic sentiment to placate his audience; and in the comedy which springs from this monstrous misalliance of Hermes and Mrs. Grundy, the prizes go only to such playwrights as can make the best of two irreconcilable worlds. Wilde wrestled with this task in "An Ideal Husband"; Somerset Maugham in "Landed Gentry"; and Mr. Sutro, as early as "The Walls of Jericho," shows signs of falling under the same fatal spell. By fits and starts the play reads like comedy of manners. "Rubbish, sir, rubbish!" protests Lord Steventon, when Jack Frobisher points out that the young blood who has got the governess into trouble has only one course open to him "as an honest man." "Pestilent and pernicious rubbish! An honest man must consider what he owes to his name and his rank——" But this will never do! An English playwright must consider what he owes to his pit and his gallery. So the honest man prevails heroically: the cynical marquess is snubbed with a suitable reference to the Almighty: and the situation is made safe for democracy, which goes home content.

But the old lure of comedy of manners had not done with Mr. Sutro yet. He embarked presently upon a comedy period, in which he seemed to be tending quite definitely to the more frivolous mode. After solemn Jack Frobisher, Mr. Vanderveldt was both fascinating and full of promise; yet there was heavy artillery even here—to be precise, our old friend the honest man, who should have stopped in Jericho rather than turn up to balk Mr. Vanderveldt of the heroine, and the whole play of fulfilling its proper function. Mr. Vanderveldt, with his delightfully tinsel wickedness and preposterous tons of granite, cried out for comedy-of-manners treatment. You may object that the honest man's solemn virtue threw Mr. Vanderveldt into higher relief; so it did, of course; but that did not justify its intrusion, still less its ultimate triumph. "Honest man!" cries Shakespeare's Frenchman indignantly. "What shall ze honest man do in my closet?" And a French critic of our stage might ask with equal point, what shall the honest man do in this all-but-comedy-of-manners where his presence is no less questionable?

Even so, the breeze of Mr. Vanderveldt blew through the play disinfecting its stuffiness. There had been no such breeze in Jericho—no breeze at all, save the prolonged blast of sentiment's trumpet; and it still seemed that Mr. Sutro might find his way out of the maze into pure comedy of manners, as Wilde had emerged finally into "The Importance of Being Ernest," and as Somerset Maugham was to emerge, temporarily, into "The Circle." But it was not to be. Just as Mr. Maugham, repentant, cast back to romantic drama and wrote "East of Suez," so at the end of this comic period Mr. Sutro, whether from personal inclination or because he feared to scare away his growing public, turned his back on comedy of manners for good and all. True, he retained all his wit, and even increased it, "John Glayde's Honour" (1907) and "The Builder of Bridges" (1909) being wittier than either of the two predecessors to which I have referred. But wit had ceased to be an end in itself; and a good deal of it was bent to the task of tickling a public taste which liked to be amused and edified at the same time. For these two (like "The Walls of Jericho") were "plays" again—*anglice*, light-comedy with a romantic-moralistic background: or what the French critic would call light-comedy spoiled. Perhaps not even light-comedy: light-drama, one would rather say. Wit became subservient to strong situations and carefully planned effects. Yet in that comedy period Mr. Sutro had kicked up his heels to some purpose, and had worked off the stiffness induced by too much devotion to technique. Just as, in his one-act plays, a series of technical exercises was followed by a series of living folk, so in "John Glayde" and "The Builder of Bridges" did the cold artifice of "Jericho" come to life. Dialogue grew more natural; more intricate plots moved swiftly and easily; type-characters blossomed into individuals. Here again, the time of apprenticeship was over, and the craftsman arrived.

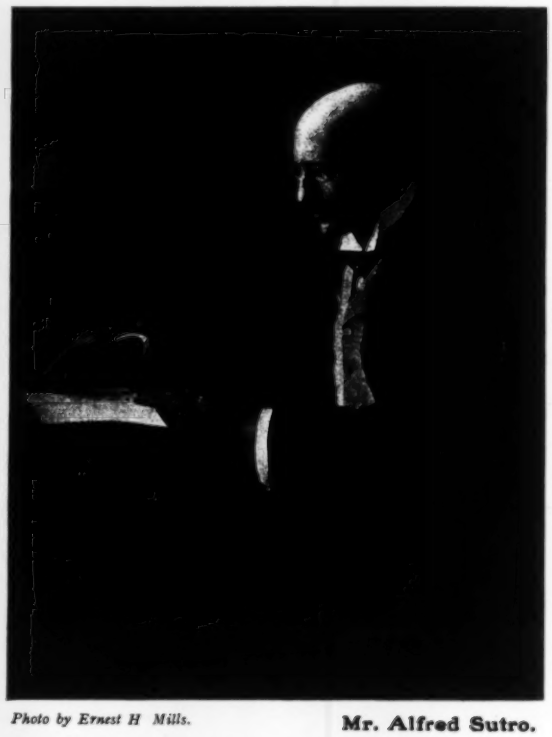

Photo by Ernest H Mills. **Mr. Alfred Sutro.**

His two last plays follow the same line of development. "The Great Well" is the more "theatrical" (none the worse for that: I will confess an actor's partiality for the "theatrical" play, and protest against the degradation of that adjective into a term of abuse). If the producers had suffered it to stand on its own legs, and had suppressed a tendency to over-acting, it would be even more effective than the present company make it. As it is, Mr. Matheson Lang does excellent work, and strikes just that mean between ruggedness and volubility which his quiet-strong-man rôle requires. "The Laughing Lady" is in lighter vein, and its first act betrays Mr. Sutro's old affection for comedy of manners. But in each case the plot twists and gleams in Mr. Sutro's practised hands like a silk hat in those of a conjurer; like a good conjurer, he extracts from it an inexhaustible variety of effects, comic and sensational; like a good conjurer again, he takes care that each trick shall be more exciting than the one before. Not till next morning, when the playhouse glamour has paled into the light of day, does one begin to wonder whether these bright, glancing, nimble-witted folk were ever quite so alive as they seemed at the moment: whether they live on in the imagination as they lived in the scene: whether the soul of them, if their body had jigged less nimbly, would not have betrayed itself as unreal and theatrical as its tinselled shell. But these are cold-blooded, matutinal reflections. Such plays aim rather to provide an evening's entertainment than to draw from life; and this Mr. Sutro has twice more done admirably. For their brief three hours' traffic his marionettes are kept alive and kicking; and although at curtain-fall, tucked up in the marriage-bed as puppets into a box, they relapse into nothingness, yet they have served their turn. For the prime need of a successful piece is that it should act at night, not that it should grip next morning. Let the superior stallite (if he still survives) deplore this Philistinism: pit and gallery know it to be true. So do the business managers. So, above all, does Mr. Sutro.

GIOVANNI PAPINI—A NEW APOSTLE.

By HENRY JAMES FORMAN.

WHO is Giovanni Papini?

There is a thrill in the thought that to-day, virtually unknown to English-speaking people, his name to-morrow perhaps will be a household word. By a single book, his "Life of Christ," he seems destined to become one of the world's great figures. In Italy the book has already created what is virtually a sensation, and all Europe and America will soon be in possession of it. Edition after edition is coming from the presses in Florence, and translations are being made all over

the world. The publication of a book like that is undeniably an arresting event.

For a writer to awaken of a morning and find himself famous, Byron's classic experience, that is undoubtedly the most satisfying of all our conceptions of an author's career. That seems to be the dramatic way for an author to arrive within the circle of our attention. Fame in ourselves or in others is relished in proportion to its suddenness.

Once a man is brightened by fame, however, we desire, oddly enough, to peer into all the shadows of his days of obscurity. Who is he? we ask. Where does he come from? What are his antecedents? Why and under what circumstances did he happen to produce this particular work, write this particular book? Why had he not produced it before? What does he mean by remaining merely a name and a private individual, when we desire to know his life, his views, his environment, his innermost thoughts, all the secrets of his existence?

In the case of Papini, the answers to these queries assume a peculiar twist of novelty. For not only had he not always been devout or even religious, but actually, according to rumour, he was a scoffing atheist, an anarchist, a grim and bitter satirist of all things the human race generally affects, and of religion most of all. And rumour in this instance is strikingly veracious.

So far from being obscure in his own country, however, he was only too well known for the hostility of his criticism of others, for the bitterness of his abuse, for the harsh sardonic terms and epithets he fastened upon things, people, other writers. For, unlike Byron, he had published some twenty-three volumes in Italy before his "Life of Christ," and every one of them, almost, has a dash of vitriol in it. He was, in a manner, like Dante and Pietro Aretino in one. He had no hesitation in stigmatising people with the bitterest opprobrium. In his writing, as in his life, he bristled with acerbity and hostility.

"If there was an unpleasant trutn to tell anyone to his face," he confesses, "I was the first to blurt it out, without beating about the bush or any circumlocution. If only I knew a man's hidden weakness, I was the one to announce it openly to him before everybody."

He was a hater, rather than a lover of his kind, a master of invective. Anarchist, atheist, nihilist, his one firm belief for a time, at least, was that suicide for the entire human race was the only salvation!

And now, within the past few years, the past few months, virtually, he has written a book that is already translated, or being translated, into a dozen languages, that turns its back upon all criticism or analysis, that has for its one aim and goal the calling back of the human race, or rather of calling it anew to the religion of love!

What is the secret? How did it happen? Was it a sudden conversion, or a growth? What manner of man is this Papini?

I wish I could paint him as he is, this new Evangelist of the study. This new Hound of Heaven, with his gaunt frame, his great shock of curling, dark hair, like a popular pianist, his thin, pallid, olive-tinted face, like an ascetic's. The deep sunken eyes of the student scrutinise you myopically from behind large, round spectacles that gleam somewhat coldly, with a chill aloofness. Yet there is an appealing weariness about the eyes, as of one who has laboured much in profound thought, and kept long vigils over books.

There is a sense of struggle about the man, of hope long deferred, of terrific energy expended in that chilly book-lined study in the modest Florentine flat. And yet, too, you have a feeling that the struggle is only beginning. His writing table is clean, like a city man's. There is no litter of papers, only a blotter and an ash-tray.

His little daughter, Gioconda, who had opened the door for me, called out blithely:

"*Babbo, un signore*—daddy, here's a man to see you," and went on about her own affairs.

"And what," demanded Signor Papini, peering closely, "do England and America wish to know about me?"

"They wish to know something of your life and history," I told him. "But first of all they wish to know how you came to write the '*Storia di Cristo.*'"

"It was the war," he broke out rapidly, as though this speech had been long pent up in him. "When the war came, and nation after nation plunged in almost without thought or care, offering up holocausts of its men, destroying, burning, killing—then I laughed with all the joyless bitterness of having one's saddest convictions confirmed. That is precisely what I believed and thought about the human race; that it was criminal and imbecile, that it was incapable of good and turned only to evil, that its dominant desire was only to destroy and to kill, to kill and to destroy. Yes, I laughed, and I was glad that my deep-rooted conviction was so amply justified.

"In time, however, this mood of scoffing and bitterness passed by. I was tormented by the question, why should this be? Why all this killing and maiming and destruction?"

Signor Papini smoked rapidly as he talked, and his eyes behind his spectacles assumed the distant speculative look of abstract thought that was evidently more normal to him than the dwelling upon objects near by.

"I began to read history," he went on, "and more and more history. I went back to the earliest historical times, as far back as 2500 B.C. And always it was the same, the development of peoples and nations led to war. It led to war owing to the failure of religion, of religion actually based upon the true spirit of love. War and destruction seemed to be the natural climax.

"I began to examine the history of capitalism and industrialism, the development of Italy, of Europe, since the fifteenth century, and the upshot, I found, had been always the same: war and destruction.

"Was there any way to avoid this horrible tragedy, to do away with it permanently?

"The only solution," he continued solemnly and more slowly, "*was to change the spirit of mankind—to turn it towards religion.*"

Signor Papini laid a clear emphasis upon every one of these words, as though to point the enormity of this conclusion *for him.*

He still looked the consternation he felt at that appallingly logical conclusion.

Always a clear thinker, trained in all the processes of

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reasoning and thinking, he examined his thought process coldly, searchingly, feverishly, by turns. Was that the only way? He peered down the vista of his reasoning as one might look down the barrel of a gun suddenly pointed at one's eyes. Was it a change of heart, or of mind? Not improbably it was something of both, intimately mingled.

"Toward the spirit of religion"—he repeated with the force of finality in his words. "That was the only way."

He saw clearly all the consequences of such a conclusion for him—Papini. For him to believe in an idea was to embrace it without reservation, with all the energy at his command. He saw all his past suddenly swept away, and all the future of attack, and ridicule, and abuse, by foes of the past, by friends of the past—a new existence of struggle and combat. But the way already lay clear before him. As a man of courage he could not choose but follow it. He was on the march—into a new life.

"That was about five years ago," he went on more rapidly. "Then I re-read Tolstoy and Dostoievsky. I spent many months of soul-searching thought. And constantly I kept returning to the same inescapable conclusion: Against the fever for destruction, against the rapacity and the evil that are in us, the only countervailing force was the spirit of religion as set forth in the Bible—in the Gospels—the spirit of true Christianity."

Then it was that the idea came to him to write the "Life of Christ," a story, neither scientific nor critical, for laymen by a modern layman, based singly upon the story of the Four Gospels—to make Christ live again for present-day humanity. And that is the book he believes he has written.

You cannot conceive how strangely all that sounded, not only from Papini, but from any modern Italian. Italy, to-day, is largely either socialistic, or materialistic, or frankly frivolous. The popular books are the light Gallic novels of Guido da Verona, or the plays of Sem Bennelli, author of "The Jest," or the writings of D'Annunzio. But Giovanni Papini is the antithesis of these writers. He has abused them roughly in his criticisms, without gloves. The author of "The Jest" is to him merely a dealer in old clothes and discarded trappings. D'Annunzio is an insincere buffoon. There is a deadly seriousness of force behind these blows that Papini strikes at his contemporaries. He is no D'Annunzio, to make an epigram, pay a compliment and kiss a lady's hand. He despises all that. His type is that of Savonarola, rather than of Petrarch. He is much more of the Fra Girolamo than of the Fra Angelico. A friend of his has declared: so ugly is Papini in appearance that portraits of him and caricatures show no appreciable difference, and he is certainly far from handsome.

His has been the lonely way of the unfavoured. From childhood, from infancy, he has been unfavoured in every respect, excepting only in his genius, and even in that he has been described as being at times a genius, at times merely ingenious. But that is a trifling epigram. No man is a genius all the time, and even the greatest minds have fallen to hack work when their stomachs craved for bread. Poverty has been Papini's lot from birth. He was no Cavalier that turned his back upon riches like another St. Francis. Poverty and he have been a sort of Siamese twins all the days of his existence.

"I believe in poverty for the artist," he said simply when we talked of it. "Not in misery, mind you [the Italian *miseria*, which means destitution], for then no thought or creative work is possible. But wholesome poverty is good for the thinker and the writer. To be brought up in luxury——" and he shook his head forbiddingly, deprecatingly.

Well, Papini encountered no such deadly peril on his arrival in the world. Gradually, in the hours and days I passed with him in his Florentine apartment, the while his young daughters Viola and Gioconda were laughing and chattering in a neighbouring room, there came out his story, bleak and austere as few, full of suffering and longing and disappointment, reminiscent of some of those cosmically sad figures that Michael Angelo loved to portray. His autobiographic novel, "*Un Uomo Finito*," begins with the words:

"I have never been a child. I have never had a childhood."

And that, I discovered, was literally true. He was born in Florence on January 9th, 1881, the son of poor parents and of a family numerous in relations. His father was a furniture maker in a small way, and to-day you can still see the name of Papini upon doors and windows of shops dealing in furniture and carpets in the heart of Florence. The elder Papini was a man of a certain energy of thought, a Garibaldista, something of a radical and revolutionary, a free-thinker, very much of a modern Italian. Whatever there may have been in the dark rooms of the modest, laborious Italian household, behind the shop, there was certainly no piety there. His mother had the boy baptised by stealth, because of her inborn instinct, but fearful lest the father should cry out in wrath against such antiquated bigotry and superstition.

From the moment he could read, however, young Papini discovered this small twilight world of his shot through at times with a strange and fearful splendour—the light of the printed word, the printed page. Into those narrow streets of old Florence, into those cramped rooms, there broke through the dazzle that has made and altered so many young lives, the world of books. There was a box of books, soiled and neglected in a dark closet—we need not dwell upon that. That story is old and familiar to many of us in our own experience.

"My passion became to know—to know—to know everything, all that had ever been printed, or written, or known. Nothing short of omniscience became my goal."

He still recalled that boyish fever for knowledge without a smile. It was still so intense and so real to him, that boyish encyclopædism. And encyclopædism naturally led to the encyclopædia—that exhaustless magazine of knowledge that answered all questions and appeased all curiosity. It was not long before he began to dream of writing an encyclopædia himself—but a far more ambitious work than any existing one; indeed, the fullest of existing ones were to be but as outlines to his own completed task. Infinite reading followed and infinitely painstaking note-gathering and filing away of information.

"Pennies was what I needed," he elucidated sadly, "pennies for paper, ink and pens, and pennies, *soldi*, were scarce."

His mother, by marvels of economy in her household allowance, managed to provide some of the *soldi*. But always he kept roaming the streets of Florence, gazing hungrily into book and stationers' shops—usually in vain.

The encyclopædia nevertheless progressed with tireless zeal. The article on "Achilles," oddly, proved to be the stumbling rock. At "Achilles" the encyclopædia abruptly halted, never to be resumed.

Giovanni Papini.

There had already been a tragedy upon the life of Christopher Columbus, composed at the age of eleven, and then, after the failure of the encyclopædia, now that the Florentine National Library was open to him, by the simple device of giving a false age, it occurred to him that a universal history from the earliest period of the existence of the Cosmos to the present day was much needed by a benighted mankind. Then presented itself the puzzle of the Biblical creation in six days and it became obvious that a rationalist and truly scientific commentary upon the Bible was the one indispensable undertaking for a ripe and serious scholar of fifteen, or thereabout. But the Bible without Hebrew—bricks without straw! He proceeded at once to learn the rudiments of the Hebrew tongue, and to toil at his commentary. By the time the commentary reached the third verse of Genesis, it was so voluminous that the mere contemplation of the completed work upon the entire Bible gave him vertigo. The commentary gave way to an exhaustive work on comparative literature—equally abortive.

"For the next four or five years," he said, "I read and wrote about fifteen hours in every day—until my health gave way."

With the fiery idealism, with the parching thirst for knowledge, there grew in his soul a profound and cavernous pessimism over what seemed the absolutely futile life of mankind. The pessimism of Schopenhauer, of Buddha with his Nirvâna, seemed half-measures to Papini—mere child's play. The only remedy for a suffering humanity was universal suicide. It gave him a grim kind of pleasure to contemplate a depopulated earth spinning deserted through infinite space, and, so far as mankind was concerned, the universe would then have ceased to exist. To be the Apostle of Suicide seemed to him then a glorious mission, and, paradoxically, he went on living, he told himself, only that he might persuade the rest of the world to die. Then, suddenly realising the grotesque absurdity of his position, he became furious with all the philosophies he had studied, principally German, that had brought him to this pitch, and he attacked them violently in a series of studies, which were subsequently published in a book entitled, "The Twilight of the Philosophers."

"The publishers had found you out early," I put in, "since you were but little over twenty when that book was published."

"The publishers!" he exclaimed bitterly. "Very far from it, it was years before they printed anything of mine at their own risk. The publication of that, as of a number of my subsequent books, was paid for—by me, by friends who subscribed 50 lire, 100 lire—what they could. There were few such friends, but they believed in me.

"It was in that way that the review *Leonardo* was founded in Florence. We came together, those intellectual friends and myself—a group of diverse tastes enough, painters, students, young idealists of varying shades who knew only that they were discontented with the thought and literature of Italy as it was. We decided that this state of affairs must be changed and improved at once. We gathered in a room by candle light, terribly aroused, terribly in earnest. There were speeches, I read a long speech myself; it was like a call to battle. Every one there pledged himself to give fifty lire a month. They elected me the editor and the review, philosophical, literary and artistic, became a fact."

It was in that review that the philosophy of Pragmatism, of which the great exponent was Professor William James of Harvard, was first made known in Italy. Pragmatism for Papini meant the bringing of our spiritual powers into use, into the business of making the world over, instead of merely standing by and looking on. And when this young Italian philosopher was barely twenty-five, James was writing articles about him, patting him on the head in the *Psychological Review* and approving his theory that a Divine omniscience is the legitimate goal of mankind.

"I met William James about that time," said Papini, laughing reminiscently. "I went to see him at the Hotel de Russie in Rome upon his invitation. To me he was an object of veneration, a hero. He was in his shirt sleeves, washing his face as I came in, but he was not in the least disturbed by that. He went right on washing himself and talking philosophy rapidly as he splashed in the basin."

Leonardo was so successful that the entire group of young men contributing to it, and supporting it, became more or less known, and Papini most of all. They were invited to write for other periodicals. So successful

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was *Leonardo* that it perished utterly in 1907, after about three years of valiant struggle. There followed other periodicals, in which Papini had a share, *La Voce, L'Anima, Lacerba*—of which none is now surviving.

Numerous volumes from Papini's pen kept appearing, critical essays, slashing studies, "Twenty-four Brains," "Testimonies," "Executions," and the like. His mind was brimming with ideas; he was always in a new movement, freighting new argosies of thought. There are three volumes of poetry among his works, and even some books of short stories, though not of the kind that editors of popular magazines usually print.

"The Blind Pilot," for instance, is the story of a mariner who invites people to sail with him, but once they have come aboard his craft, he knows not whither to take them. There is the tale of a diver who has spent so much time among the gardens and beautiful pleasaunces under the sea, that when he comes back to his home in the modern city he turns with horror and revulsion from the sights that assail his eyes and he can no longer live there.

"In other words," I remarked, "you had struggled out of the early days and were now in the full tide of authorship, living by literature."

"By literature!" he recoiled visibly. "Never—not until the last year or two. I was still as poor almost as in my boyhood. I worked in the library of the Museum of Anthropology but that yielded me nothing. I worked there for the sake of the books that came under my hands. My honorarium was sixty lire every New Year's Day, about four shillings a month. Then and subsequently I gave lessons, I wrote reviews for newspapers, I made translations. I translated all the works of the English philosopher Berkeley for the sum of two hundred lire—about eight pounds sterling. Less than two years ago I was still giving lessons, among others, to an American student in Italian philology."

When one recalls that Papini left the public schools of Florence when he was under fifteen, and never attended a college or a university, his knowledge and erudition seem truly amazing.

"Were your parents able to help you at all?" I asked him.

"My parents," he answered, "desired me to enter the family furniture business. When I declined there were quarrels, scenes, and I left the house before I was nineteen."

But the atheistic strain imbibed at home persisted late and one of his books that he has recently withdrawn from circulation is entitled "Memoirs of God," an essay in which conditions are reversed, and the Diety is praying to mankind, asking that all turn atheist, so that He might cease to be. Altogether it is as blasphemous a little volume as one may well expect to light upon.

Yet there was always in his temperament the curious affinity for religious thought, religious subjects. When he was not scoffing at religion, he was feverishly dreaming of founding a new one. Theosophy preoccupied him at one time, occultism, yogi-ism, sainthood. And he even subjected himself to the ascetic discipline of some of the cults, because a saint, the founder of a new religion, must be able to work miracles.

One of his dreams was to write a vast religious epic, a sort of cross between Dante's "Divine Comedy" and Goethe's "Faust," to be entitled "*Dies Irae.*" The subject of "*Dies Irae*" was to be the Last Judgment, and its aim the salvation and renewal of mankind. Always his thought ran not in terms merely sectional or national, but in terms of all humanity. Small themes were hateful to him. Mere cleverness he despised.

"I lived in an atmosphere of grandeur," he writes of those days, "thinking of great subjects. A cosmic poem, a universal drama—a vast scene—that was what I wanted to write."

He wanted to write of that day of days—the last dreadful day when the sun was become pallid as the moon, when the heavens darkened, when the earth had shrivelled and cracked like a dried kernel. And the remnant of mankind had fled with the beasts into the caves and recesses against the night of eternal winter descending. Then the valley of Jehoshaphat, vast as the world, from sea to sea, opened wide, and all the myriad companies of the dead stood forth and awaited the Judgment. The Babel of tongues precluded understanding. But in the end, after this Titanic review of all mankind, a Voice speaks and decrees to each person that which in life he had hoped for. Paradise for those who had longed for eternal life, and dust and ashes for those who had believed only in death. Then at last and for eternity mankind was at rest.

That epic was never written, and I merely mention it to show that in a way Papini had never quite known or quite understood himself: the religion which he in a manner despised seemed his one constant temptation. The "*Storia di Cristo,*" outwardly a complete reversal of his former attitude and beliefs, seems in reality a kind of natural development of his confused and constant groping towards idealism.

To his friends, however, to many of his radical, modernist, futurist followers and old associates of the earlier days, the publication of that book was nothing short of a supreme and unspeakable apostasy. Papini was always doing the unexpected. But among all the impossible things he might have done, a book like this Story of the Christ was the one thing they never dreamed of his doing. Some still think it was mere journalism, a "stunt" to make money, but most, and those who know him best, know that the man is in deadly earnest, and to them his offence is capital, irreparable. Of course there are plenty of new friends to praise him. A book like the *Storia*, thick and comparatively expensive, selling 75,000 copies in Italy alone within a few months, must have an army of enthusiastic readers. But the former admirers of the bold thinker, the irreverent speculative philosopher, the lashing, dashing critic and journalist, all these see in his turning to God only a bowing in the Temple of Mammon. At this, however, Papini merely smiles.

"I am old enough to know," he says, "that to be merely consistent for the sake of consistency is, for the writer, death—the end of all development. Courage is the secret, and the whole secret. One cannot live without the courage of one's convictions."

Yes—to his old admirers Papini is dead—a man who is done for. But in his austere study in Florence he seemed to me very much alive. He is working constantly and is full of plans and projects. At this

moment he is planning and working upon four different books at once.

There is an apology for Christianity, a sort of Second Coming that is occupying his attention. Also there is a new novel, not religious, but with a spiritual background. Then there is a study of mankind in its relations to life, a serious work that must take time. And, finally, there is a survey of Italian history, a sort of philosophy of history—not history as taught in the schools.

With the vast energy and capacity for work that Papini has at command, those books will probably proceed very rapidly from his pen. He is what might be described as a ready writer. William James has declared him to be possessed of a "real genius for cutting and untechnical phraseology," and all his work shows an amazing facility in language, be it descriptive, polemical, or expository. He holds himself entitled to this gift by virtue of being a Tuscan, a Florentine, a spiritual descendant of Dante and Savonarola and Machiavelli.

"The '*Storia di Cristo*,'" he said, "was written in two years, but counting out interruptions and time lost, it actually took only about five or six months." And now he believes his energy will be much greater, for having died to the old life, he feels embarked upon a new. This book, as he announces in the preface to the *Storia*, is dedicated to the enterprise of "Remaking Souls."

In a city like Florence, with its long and tense history, four or five hundred years is a comparatively short period. And the Papini of to-day can speak with perfect composure and without affectation or strain of continuing the work of Girolamo Savonarola, begun in 1495. In those days Christ was elected King of Florence by a large majority. The election, says Papini, was never repudiated. Upon the Palazzo Vecchio a marble tablet still records it. After four hundred years of usurpation, he declares, the writer of the *Storia* is "proud to identify himself as a subject and soldier of Christ the King."

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

FEBRUARY, 1923.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best short passage from English literature, in prose or verse, in which pathos and humour are mingled. No extract to exceed two hundred words.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

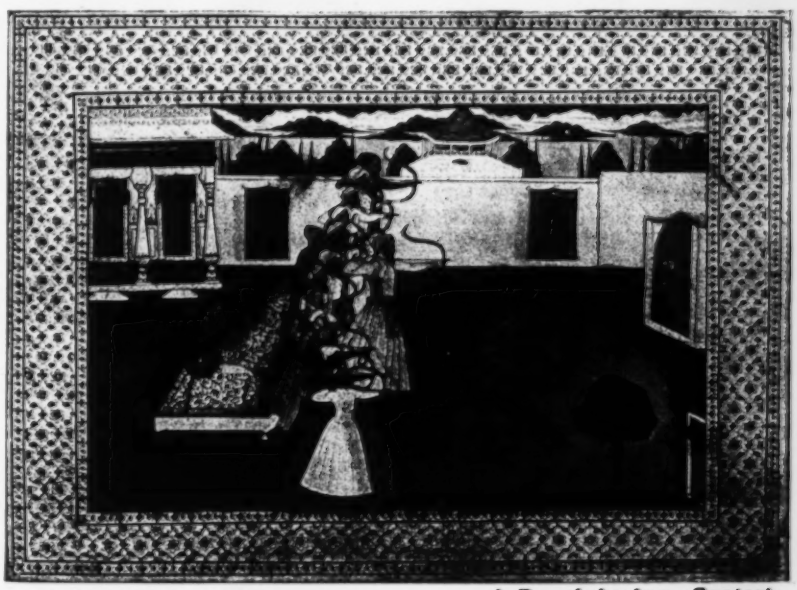
V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR JANUARY.

I.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to M. D. Baynes, of 72, Warwick Street, London, S.W.1, for the following:

TO A GARDEN, ON LEAVING IT.

If you a woman were, your voice would be
Like song upon the mountains, heard in sleep
From fairy lips; and if beloved by me,
And thus by me deserted, you would weep



A Royal Archery Contest.

A Mogul Prince with thirteen companions shooting at a target in the palace courtyard—*c* 1800.
From "The A B C of Indian Art," by J. F. Blacker (Stanley Paul).

No angry tears as lovely woman spurned,
But near the fire would draw my empty chair
With hands I loved, and think I had returned,
Nor know that ghosts went up and down the stair.

But you're a garden, watched by ancient eaves,
A garden sweet with birds from dawn till dark;
Where other feet than mine shall stir the leaves,
And eyes that haply love thee not shall mark

How soft young boughs have broken in the gale,
And bindweed, rooting surely in the sod,
With sickly flowers, poisonous and pale,
Has strangled all my slender golden-rod.

I loved you in your flaming noonday pride,
Or cold beneath the midnight stars, and yet
It haunts my heart to think the world is wide,
And you'll be lovely still, and I forget.

For other gardens stand in other fields,
Unnumbered paths are white when blossom falls
In sudden wind, and honeysuckle yields
Its ecstasy upon a thousand walls.

And not this garden only hums with bees
On afternoons when lovely shadows lie
On quiet earth from dear familiar trees—
For men have many homes before they die.

We also select for printing:

REVELATION.

With love-skilled hands you have unrolled
My cloudy cere-cloths, fold on fold,
That over-long have stopped my breath,
And shrouded me in semblant death.
Now in your brilliant, burning eyes
I see new worlds, new suns, new skies;
I reach up eager hands to take
The drift of stars that, flake by flake,
Like your white dreams about me fall.
And like a leaf when wild winds call,
Far off on unseen wings is hurled
From me the shadow of the world.

(Pamela Marsh, Room 127, 133, Moorgate, E.C.)

THE OLD LOVER.

I, who have found love simple,
  Yet found it hard to keep,
And wayward as the April light
  Above the hills of sheep—
More swiftly lost than ripple-rings
  On pools remote and deep.

And I have found it lovely
  As any late-lit star,
And distant as the watching eyes
  That know where sunsets are—
More haunting than the moon's pale face
  Through curtained clouds afar.

But I have found love homely,
  And very, very kind,
A tended fire, a sheltered hearth,
  Against the world's keen wind.
All this was in the perfect love
  That I praised God to find.

(Vera I. Arlett, 5, Forest Road, Broadwater, Worthing.)

YOUTH.

Let us ride out with the great king, the little king of dreams,
  And wander the wide world over till we find the land of content;
For the Court is much too old for us, and all is not what it seems,
  So saddle your horse and the king's horse, we will ride e'er the light is spent.

Do you not feel that the Court is slow, that it cannot understand
  Why the wind calls, and the stars call; why the moon itself is a gem?
Do you not feel you are fettered down and shut away from the world
  When you hear the pine-woods calling, and cannot answer them?

Oh! saddle your horse and the king's horse, and let us get away
  From the stifling air of the closed rooms, from the Court so full of sin,
And let us ride at the king's side to find the joys of the world,
  And only stop our journey when Death shall rein us in!

(Deric Harris, "The Willows," Westbourne Avenue, Hull.)

We select for special commendation the lyrics by Edward H. Wilson (Carlisle), Winnifred Tasker (Bournemouth), Dorothy Cook (Aberdeen), Marjorie Crosbie (Wolverhampton), Dora A. Pattinson (Middlesbrough), Alice Youle Hind (Brighton), Elsie M. Roberts (East Croydon), Mildred Taylor (Manchester), Ann H. D. Brown (London, S.W.), Dorothy Hope (Southwold), Kathleen Ida Noble (London, E.), Arch. H. Newman, Jnr. (Montreal), Molly Young (Cropton), Will A. Jary (Blackpool), Thomas Edmund Kinns (Port Elizabeth), Una Malleson (London, W.), R. Fortescue Doria (Cheltenham), Marshall Louis Mertins (Kansas City), Dorothy Slide (Birmingham), Lucy Richardson (Scarborough), Ada Harrison (Rome), Teresa Bellamy Noble (London, E.), Mrs. E. D. Holtinsall (Chili), E. M. Wills (Almora, N. India), J. R. Clemens (Missouri, U.S.A.), "Evergreen" (South Tottenham), Mabel Witt (San Francisco), I. M. Old (Saltburn-by-the-Sea), Dorothy Slatford (Manchester), F. N. J. (London, S.W.), L. M. Priest (Norwich), Ruby Baughman (Los Angeles), N. Langton (Muswell Hill), Julia Wickham Greenwood (Gibraltar), Margaret Aldridge (St. John's Wood), Sibyl Webster (Hadley Wood), Sadie C. Clay (Wakefield), H. H. Johnson (St. Boniface), Agnes D. Scott (Woolwich), Phyllis Howell (Carmarthen), D. Winder (Scarborough), John Heffner (Natal), Ivan Adair (Dublin), Donald Stewart (Sutton, Surrey), W. O'Handlen (Oxford), W. Maxfield Rogers (Wimbledon), Constance Pendlebury (Chapel-en-le-Frith), C. A. Renshaw (Sheffield), John A. Bellchambers (Highgate Hill), Florence Borradaile (Leamington), Eleanor Hepplethwaite (Wimbledon), Roslyn (Auckland, N.Z.), G. C. Grant (Aberdeen).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Vere Russell, of 22, Glenorchy Terrace, Edinburgh, for the following:

THE VOICE FROM THE VOID. By WILLIAM LE QUEUX. (Cassell.)

"I pr'ythee go, and get me some repast;
I care not what so it be wholesome food."

SHAKESPEARE, *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV, Sc. 3.

Mr. Michael Arlen,
whose new novel, "Piracy" (Collins), was reviewed in last month's BOOKMAN.

We also select for printing:

THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH.

BY G. K. CHESTERTON.

(Cassell.)

"Hold thy peace, thou Knave."

SHAKESPEARE, *Twelfth Night.*

(Constance Stephens, 145, Revidge Road, Blackburn, Lancs.)

ON THE BORDERLAND. BY F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

(Hurst & Blackett.)

"He thought he saw an elephant
That practised on a fife;
He looked again and found it was
A letter from his wife."

LEWIS CARROLL.

(J. Pearson, 50, Savile Park Road, Halifax, Yorks.)

NOBODY'S MAN. BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

(Hodder & Stoughton.)

(1) "A bachelor of three-score."

SHAKESPEARE, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act I, Sc. 1.

(Rev. F. Hern, Rowlands Castle, Hants.)

(2) "I might be hashed to death, or smashed
By Mr. Pickford's van
Without, I fear, a single tear."

HOOD, *I'm Not a Single Man.*

(W. L. Dudley, Ranfurly Castle School, Bridge of Weir, Scotland.)

III.—The PRIZE for the best valentine to any well-known man or woman is divided, and Two BOOKS each awarded to B. Ionides, of 25, First Avenue, Hove, Sussex, and William Sutherland, of 2, North Grove, Roker, Sunderland, for the following:

A VALENTINE TO MR. BONAR LAW.

All greetings to you, man of peace,
May Bolsheviks withdraw,
And Labour's opposition cease;
O give us, Bonar, Law.

B. IONIDES.

TO MR. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

To see you passing people crane their necks;
From you the autograph collector begs;
I wonder, now, if people's necks are stretched
Because you "pull their legs"?

WILLIAM SUTHERLAND.

We specially commend the Valentines sent by E. A Pearson (Seaton Carew), Ethel Sweatman (Caversham), Margaret McIntyre (Oxford), Miss V. Huish (Bournemouth), Winifred M. Simmons (Parkstone), Richard Tucker (Tavistock), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), B. M. Beard (Bexleyheath), C. Burton (Upper Norwood), Marcus Hyman (Clapton), H. W. Longbottom (Birmingham), Margery Constance Nudd (Yiewsley), William Donald (Ayr).

Miss Stella Benson,
whose successful novel, "The Poor Man" (Macmillan), is reviewed in this Number.

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review is awarded to H. M. Creswell Payne, Finnart Boys' School, Newquay, Cornwall, for the following:

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIFE. BY ALEC WAUGH. (Collins.)

There is a wonderful freshness and charm about Alec Waugh. This book may be characterised by some as egotistical and presumptuous; it is certainly marked by a delightful frankness and enthusiasm. Bearing the marks of undoubted authenticity, it can hardly fail to do what its author intended—describe our public school life from inside knowledge and not from the teachers' point of view. We believe that it will refresh and enlighten many a tired professor and puzzled pedagogue. Above all—if they read it—it will prove a source of wise illumination to parents of boys.

We also select for printing:

THE LIFE OF ISOBEL EARNE.

BY PEGGY WEBLING. (Hutchinson.)

"Isobel Erne" has a suggestion of power, lacking in Miss Webling's earlier books. Instead of being a collection of isolated studies, her characters are moulded into a convincing background, thereby adding greatly to their value. From the time when, a sensitive and imaginative child, Isobel sees her ideal in Godfrey Strang, the middle-aged author, her life holds something of tragedy. Her marriage with Joe Hesketh seems a happy one, contrasting favourably with that of her sister Cecilia. Only her aunt, Althea Roseglade—after Isobel the best-drawn character in the book—realises that Isobel has missed the greatest thing in life.

(Sybil G. Dean, 16, Ryll Grove, Exmouth, Devon.)

THE DIVINE TRAGEDY. BY A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

(Selwyn & Blount.)

The manner of Christ's reception if He came to London is an old question that has exercised many imaginations, but Mr. Adcock has given it new life in this noble-spirited poem. An irregular-rhymed verse reminiscent of Dryden admirably suits this moving picture of Christ in Bethnal Green, His lionising by West End society, and their ultimate rejection of His passionate doctrine of love and brotherhood. The gulf that yawns between our professed Christianity and the true spirit of Jesus is trenchantly treated by a satirical and biting pen, but withal, a tender and rich-blooded humanity glows on every page.

(Sidney S. Wright, 171, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent.)

THE CUCKOO'S NEST. BY CHRISTINE JOPE-SLADE.

(Nisbet.)

This is a delightful book for an idle hour, and is lifted from the commonplace by Miss Jope-Slade's rare wit

XUM

and happy characterisation. One grows to love Poppy Whistler, the comfortable little middle-class woman who is forced by her daughter's ambition into such different society. The author writes with a humorous understanding of the foibles of human nature, and has the gift of sketching a character in a few words—"Queer fellow, all his thoughts nicely hemmed and all that." "The Cuckoo's Nest," though merely a "light novel," deserves a wide public.

(A. Wunderby, Mount Barker, South Australia.)

We select for special commendation the reviews sent by W. L. Dudley (Bridge of Weir), Ethel E. Mannin (Morton Park), Geoffrey H. Wells (Cardiff), G. Ralton Barnard (York), James A. Richards (Tenby), Hilton Brown (Wimereux,), Reginald May (Chelsea), David Duncan (Liverpool), Mannington Sayers (Monmouth), Miss J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), V. B. Fox (London, W.), Eleanor Freeman (Harrogate), Arbel M. Aldous (Colchester), J. Kilmeny Keith (London, W.), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), Reginald A. Smith (Burton-on-Trent), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Miss S. A. Griffiths (Ferndale), Miss Emily Edis (Bristol), Elsa Gellert (Harrogate), B. Noel Saxelby (Manchester), Lilian M. Bridges (Salisbury), Miss A. M. Hillier (London, N.)

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to J. Kilmeny Keith, of 25, Auriol Road, London, W.14.

HENRY AND THOMAS VAUGHAN.

BY A. E. WAITE.

IN the year 1622 there were born into the world those twin brothers Henry and Thomas Vaughan, Thomas being senior to the extent of some minutes. The event took place at Newton-St.-Bridget, on the banks of the Usk in Brecknockshire. Their branch of the Vaughan family had its original home in south-east Wales, the land of the Silures, and so it came about that when the younger son, in his vocation as a poet, began publishing little books of verse he styled himself the Silurist. The elder wrote also, as we shall see, but it was always under an assumed name or some veil of this kind. Yet he was Silurist also and might have adopted the designation. Both became known to fame, though in widely different ways of thought and expression.

Henry Vaughan's titles to remembrance were determined long since. If he stands among the heirs of immortality below his kinsman George Herbert the titles are beyond challenge. Unlike Richard Lovelace, he has not become "familiar in our mouths as household words" in virtue of two imperishable verses, and unlike William Chamberlayne of "Pharronida" repute, he has not left us a romantic poem which a few can yet read because of its story. Yet he ranks above Chamberlayne and Lovelace, as Crashaw at his best is above all, including Herbert. He who invoked Santa Teresa as "undaunted daughter of desire" made for real greatness in certain moments, though at his worst he descended far beneath the least of any. Herbert himself carries the palm of grace and lucidity of even thought. He was Henry Vaughan's master as well as kinsman, and the debt was one of spiritual religious influence exercised on the man himself and his life, as well as on his art in verse. Now, it is a gift of the spirit which Vaughan has bequeathed to the English generations after him, a gift of understanding in the spirit, and its particular quality is that it is rooted in realisation of the Divine Presence, so that wind cannot stir, "Or beam pass by," but he feels God's hand therein, and thus always and everywhere does "the Spirit lead his mind."

It is all a little overlaid with the accidents of official doctrine and revelation, derived from Jewish Scriptures and—if a mystic may so far venture—it is overlaid also by the official side of Christian doctrine—physical resurrection, general judgment and matters of this kind, as also with the externals of that Divine Life in Palestine which only delivers its plenary message when it is received by the soul within into the inmost heart of the soul. Yet the spirit of which I have spoken shines through in Vaughan's poems, even if intermittently. I do not intend to suggest that he presented intimations of experience in mystic union, even when most uplifted and most inspired. "I see them walking in an air of glory," he says of those his friends who have "gone into the world of light," and there is no Eckehart speaking, or even a Tauler. But as he testified of others, so is it true of him that "some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes," and they look not only into the glory but cast its bright reflection on our own minds. "Remove me hence unto that hill, Where I shall need no glass" foresees that light which is all light in the spirit and belongs to "the vision which is He." It may come about in the secret office of such suggestions that something will awaken within us, as it awakened once in him, and we also within our own measures and from our own angle may look on True Beauty. This is his kind of gift to those who have an inward eye which can be raised from sleep, and it does not signify that the images which have stirred in him the faculty of such vision are not precisely those which will minister best to us, for we shall find that which we need by keeping the vigil of the eye, while we follow his gentle leading. Some of us also, like him, are in search of a "hidden treasure," and if it is not altogether that which was bodied forth to his own mind, his zeal can kindle ours, so that we in our path of life may find that which we are seeking, as he found before us.

The voice of Vaughan is most often a voice of very peace, and to us, "in this busy street" of which he tells, his message comes like a word whispered in the heart of a stillness. If I may speak for a brief moment of my own case, it is by no means a voice which is native to those states or places, for tidings of which I have been looking through long days, and yet it is something like an echo in another manner of language. He who asked to be "winged and free," to be "quite undressed" with God was asking in his own strange tongue for that which Donne was praying in another manner of language, and one not less strange, namely, to be ravished by God, and for that which Ruysbroeck reached over the vast ocean of Divinity, *in Portu Tranquillitatis*, which is the port of rapture. It lies beyond the world of images and beyond that

> "holy, happy, healthy Heaven,
> Where all is pure, where all is even,
> Plain, harmless, faithful, fair and bright."

But this paradise of Vaughan is its threshold, and when we contemplate it with him as our companion, beyond his "living fountains" and his "everlasting, spicy mountains," it does not seem long to the coming of that true voice which shall draw the seeker on and so in fine "take home."

There is nothing to be said about the life of Henry Vaughan; the little that is on record lies within the compass of sentences and is known to every one who knows anything of English literature in the seventeenth century. From the tuition of Matthew Herbert at Llangattock we are aware that he proceeded to Oxford, though there is no official record. About 1640 he was in London, studying law; he took up arms, like his brother, in the Royalist cause, returned to his native Wales during the Commonwealth, saw that interregnum end, outlived the Restoration, and died in the days of William and Mary, 1695. This is almost the sum of our knowledge, rather than its heads recited; it may be said, for us at least, that his poems are his life. There were five volumes published between 1646 and 1678.

Thomas Vaughan wrote occasional verses and was not without signs of vocation, but his record in literature is that of a mystic alchemist, in which capacity he issued a number of little books—e.g. *Lumen de Lumine*—which are highly prized by the few and are read sometimes by those who make no pretence of understanding them, because the English there and here is not less than beautiful. They were written under the pseudonym of Eugenius Philalethes and once under the terminal letters of his names, S. N. He has been confused frequently with a not less famous alchemist who wrote as Eirenæus Philalethes and whose identity has never transpired. They divide between them the honours of Hermetic adeptship in the days of Cromwell and Charles II. Thomas Vaughan is reported to have died tragically as the result of a chemical experiment in 1665, but several elements of uncertainty surround this story. In any case his brother survived him, and wrote his elegy under the title of "Daphnis." It must be added that Thomas Vaughan as a mystic is comparable to his brother as a poet: both are lights upon the path, but beyond that point where the lamps they uplifted reach is the realm where those who are called must pursue their quest, if somehow they would reach its end.

New Books.

FOUR ESSAYISTS.*

First place to the lady—by courtesy and by merit; for her volume has the kind of grace that is distinguished, elegant and aloof. She has indeed the gift that Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson discerned in Sir Willoughby Patterne and called by a name that we should blush to use on the present occasion. Whatever her subject she seems to find precisely the word that touches her point to perfection, and she never adds the touch too much. Without ceasing for a moment to be English, her prose has just a hint of something caught from the tongue that has given us the razor-edged smoothness of Voltaire and the infinite delicacy of Anatole France. Indeed the first part of her volume actually deals with the land that English people try so hard to like. There are memories of a childhood in Boulogne, the wane of summer in the same city, this odd man, that odd woman, those remote children at play, a vision of Sainte Jeanne—all caught and rendered with perfect art. The second half of the volume brings us to England, and mainly to London, Chelsea coming in specially as the background of some fine figure studies. The longest sketch in the book—it is called "Shore"—is specially admirable, not only for its "interior" and its rendering of the woman who is the presiding spirit, but also for its achievement in presenting to us a man who never appears and is never even described. At its best, the book is an example of the art that we call exquisite, and connoisseurs will linger over it with appreciation.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Robert Lynd.**

Mr. Robert Lynd's volume is equally good in the other direction of "essayism." Just as Mrs. Garvin's pages are full of beautiful silences, Mr. Lynd's are full of cheerful talk. He runs on; he has the right essayist garrulity and the right essayist spirit, for his papers, varied as they are, all run together in the mind and produce a single effect, the effect of a single personality. Now, though heathen young men (and a few old ones) furiously rage together in their attempts to decide what is an essay, they will never get very far until they recognise that, whatever its size, shape, subject or purpose, an essay must proceed from a full mind and coherent personality able to take a view of things and to express that view with

* "As You See It." By "V." (Mrs. J. L. Garvin). 6s. (Methuen.)—"Solomon in All His Glory." By Robert Lynd. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)—"Occasions." By Holbrook Jackson. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)—"Oh To Be In England." By S. P. B. Mais. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)

XUM

individual force or charm or even oddity, and certainly with individual consistency. You have only to think for a moment of such classic essayists as Montaigne, Bacon, Addison and Lamb to see how this description or definition applies. Among contemporaries, Belloc, Chesterton, Milne and Arnold Bennett (in his "Jacob Tonson" papers) will offer further examples. In short an essay must always be "in character," and that character a genuine, noticeable personality. In the present volume Mr. Lynd shows himself clearly possessed of these requirements. He runs on, as we have said; but he runs on with perfect ease, and runs all the way as truly himself as a river. I doubt if he has ever written so delightfully, and I am sure he has never written so humorously. His subjects vary from birds to beavers (var. *hirsutus*), and he doesn't make a miss at any. If I like the first (the titular) essay best, the subject being kingfishers, it is because I am reminded first of a lovely spring day last year when we saw four of these incredible beauties skimming the water near Old Windsor Lock, and then of a sadder day last autumn when we found one dying in a hedge near Mortlake. Any kingfisher might reasonably die near Mortlake; but what was it doing so far down the river?

Mr. Holbrook Jackson's volume is less good, because it is not so much a book as a collection of articles. Some of the papers (I hasten to say) are very enjoyable and thoroughly worth inclusion; others are less attractive and not in harmony with the rest. The essays, in short, do not run together and become one thing, with an effect of personal and literary unity. They fall roughly into two classes, the matterful and the mannerful. I am pretty sure the author himself prefers the mannerful; but I am equally sure the matterful ones are better. Let him compare the essay called "The Pathos of Profanity" (one of the best) with that called "On Losing Oneself." The first is full of matter charmingly put together, shaped and rounded off. You want to mark things in it, and you resolve to turn back and reread it. But observe in the other paper such a sentence as this:

> "Mark some infant voyager among the domestic archipelagos of the larger furniture. How gingerly he takes his compassless way—surprised at his successful doubling of the vast Chesterfield reef, and tearful though undaunted by his collision with the coal-scuttle, until at length the still lagoon beneath the shade of the dining-room table is reached, where he may map out the journey in comparative safety."

What is the matter with it all? The matter is that there is no matter, but only manner, and (as Malvolio might say) a very ill manner. Mr. Holbrook Jackson will probably hate me for ever when I tell him that his sentence *isn't true;* it isn't artistically sincere and doesn't cohere with any sort of personality. It is the sort of thing one tolerates in a college magazine from the ingenious undergraduate who has acquired a number of manners that haven't yet coalesced into personality. But surely Mr. Holbrook Jackson doesn't want to be called a clever young man at this time of day! I beg him therefore to glance with critical eye through his volume as if it were another's and see if he doesn't find the "objective," matterful papers the best part of it. I am sure they are the best of himself, for they are the most likeable.

Our fourth volume, that by Mr. Mais, has specifically one subject. It is called in the sub-title "A Book of the Open Air," yet it is not really a book at all, but an unabashed collection of articles on different planes, in different moods and, I should think, of widely different dates. That is to say they do not cohere. Mr. Mais is, we know, a vigorous and breezy person, but he isn't the same person all through this book. Journalism sometimes requires us to be what we are not; literature demands that we shall be ourselves. Here on one page we find that the best short holiday we can take as a complete change is to hang the expense, go to Brighton in a Pullman and stay for a week-end, and at the best hotel; it is thoroughly worth the money. But a few pages later on, lo! this identical experience is described as a melancholy and ghastly failure. On many pages we find Mr. Mais beagling and doing other vigorous things which, he assures us, will make us robust, hard and fit for anything; and we enjoy the illusion till we reach other pages and find Mr. Mais fearfully knocking at doors in Harley Street and being ordered off north, south, east and west because he is a physical wreck! I think it is a pity he didn't cut the three hundred odd pages of his book down to half and confine it to his purely descriptive holiday experiences on foot in various parts of these beloved islands. He can do that sort of thing very well, and he will do it even better if he will do it more leisurely and "study to be quiet."

GEORGE SAMPSON.

J. C. SQUIRE'S ESSAYS.*

It is to be hoped that the publication of Mr. Eagle's book simultaneously with that of Mr. Squire will not affect the popularity of "Books Reviewed." These authors are two of the best friends which the modern reader possesses, and it would be a world of pities if anything should make them fall out. Solomon Eagle, in spite of his vaticinatory cognomen, is the livelier fellow of the two. We see him more often—not precisely in undress, but on his way home, in his private moods; J. C. Squire, while himself a man of humour and wit, takes himself and his books rather more seriously than does his friend Eagle. It would perhaps be fitting to deal first with J. C. Squire's volume.

The essays in his book were contributed week by week to the *Observer*. Critics of literature have recently begun to notice the change which conditions have forced on our essayists and critics. Although the quarterlies still continue, there is no doubt that a larger and larger number of our critics earn their living by writing for the daily or weekly press. This means that a man who would, in the old days, have carefully and ingeniously flayed Mrs. de Burgh Balansey's fashionable novel, "The Vapours," in some fifteen to twenty thousand words, now performs his task in, at the most, a thousand. No one in this case loses anything except Mrs. de Burgh Balansey, who misses several pages of exquisite torture. Unfortunately, however, the poor thousand words also have to do service for the most important of modern books; and there comes the test of the critic.

Of living critics who have adapted themselves triumphantly to the changed conditions, the best are Mr. Clutton-Brock, Mr. Lynd, Mr. Middleton Murry and Mr. Squire. None of them is always successful—in this volume, for instance, Mr. Squire is evidently cramped in writing of Miss Katherine Mansfield, whose stories present a problem in letters not easily soluble in one or two thousand words. On the whole, however, Mr. Squire is, with Mr. Lynd, the most successful in his adaptation to the new circumstances. There are several essays here—on Baudelaire, on Marvell, on Mark Akenside, on the Laureates—which could not be improved. There is no article which has not its good things: the only general criticism I have to make is that Mr. Squire is apt, occasionally, to key his praise too high. For instance, to say of Mr. Strachey's "Queen Victoria":

> "There is no such short biography in English; thinking of its analogues, one finds oneself inevitably comparing it not with records of fact, but with fictions. He is really one of the post-Flaubert novelists. . . . Such closeness and evenness of texture, such clarity and terseness of phrase, can be found nowhere in biography"—

is to exaggerate. Leaving aside such books as Carlyle's "Sterling" or Morley's "Voltaire," I think Mr. Chesterton's "Browning" would easily compare with Mr. Strachey's ironical and over-praised study of Queen Victoria. I find it, too, difficult to believe that Mr. Squire really means what he says when he writes, "I do not believe that there

* "Books Reviewed." By J. C. Squire. "Essays at Large." By Solomon Eagle. 7s. 6d. each. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

exists a greater work of prose fiction in English than 'Moby Dick.'"

Solomon Eagle has never published a better book than this latest one of his. Throughout he is in excellent fettle—I wish he would write an article and say what "fettle" is; but I gather from his essay on "Press Cuttings" that he does not have his reviews sent to him; so I shall have to send him this copy of THE BOOKMAN—if I can get one. Well, he is in good form here, whether he writes on the Bodleian, or Lewis Carroll's notes on "In Memoriam," or "Prose Poems," or collectors, or Shakespeare, or Disraeli, or Chinese verse, or Reading in Bed.

If you want to sample Solomon Eagle at his best I should advise you to begin with the essay called "A Trick of Memory." It is the most ingenious fooling in the highest spirits:

"I do not know that I ever heard a story about a cuckoo, a story in which the word 'cuckoo' occurred, the point of which was not some ridiculous blunder. There is, for example, the story (there always is) about the curate. He was invited to an immense house-party at a duchess's. At tea in the afternoon of his arrival he did not speak; his nervousness was painfully evident. Nor did he speak during the interval between tea and dinner. Nor during dinner could the assistance of two charming neighbours and the auxiliary resources of his anxious hostess produce from him anything but blushes and nervous tremblings. When the meal was over the ladies prolonged their stay for the sake of helping him to start. At last hope was given up; but just as the hostess was rising, his mouth was observed to be shaping itself towards some end, and there was a hasty resettlement. All listened anxiously, endeavouring to mask their painfully solicitous concentration. At last he broke the silence. 'The c-c-cuckoo,' he said, 'is a m-much larger bird than you would s-s-suppose.' There is also the story of the child who brought back the cuckoo clock with the bitter complaint that it oo'ed before it cuck'ed."

The papers of Eagle are full, too, of information. He does our reading for us—not our æsthetic reading, but the reading of old calendars, of old reviews, of old catalogues and obscure contemporary papers. In his essay on "Reading in Bed" he discusses what books are useful for that honourable purpose: I have no hesitation in telling any reader in bed to add to his bed-bookshelves this and the other volumes of Solomon Eagle and J. C. Squire.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

HUDSON'S LAST WORD.*

We must be thankful that W. H. Hudson's very last book, which in fact needed the sympathetic skill of Mr. Morley Roberts to attain completion, is a sort of compendium of the enduring and endearing qualities which appear in varying degrees in his other books. The naturalist, with a store of first-hand information which could put many scientists to the blush, the boyish adventurer through life and the poet with ever-receptive senses, the worldly-wise and the humorous philosopher—they are all to be seen here, alert as ever. Notwithstanding its speed of thought, pictorial vividness and deft vivacity of allusion, the book is a unity, well welded by the writer's unfaltering imagination. In Hudson there is all the happy curiosity and caprice of a boy as he sits under a tree in Richmond Park watching that hind eat acorns, and trying his whistling experiment to see what the hind's ears will do. The apparent irresponsibility with which his mind sets off from Richmond Park and travels across eighteen chapters packed with beautiful or strange sights, sounds, smells, reminiscences, speculations, is however but a delicate veil upon the naturalist's artistic purpose. His unsleeping sense of beauty and a sly lurking spirit of fun play deft sleight-of-hand tricks before our slow gaze. Hence the rapid succession of themes leaves the sense of continuity intact. Breathless but delighted, we rush after him across the subjects—habits of deer, senses in dog and deer, instinct, wild and domestic animals, the beautiful trumpet ear of the hind, the ear trumpet and "Strange case of a deaf lady listening through an ear trumpet to a sermon!" Lots more about ears, and the imperfection of human ears, which are deafened by wind. Hence about wind, women's unsuitable clothing, "Light from the dark ages," a Saint's biography, Ellen in "News from Nowhere," wind in poetical literature. After this it is the most natural process imaginable to come to flying, flying thoughts, telepathy, character-reading, sense of smell, smells, flowers, Wordsworth, Shakespeare, Chaucer! Soon however you will return with Hudson to Mother Earth before springing off into another entrancing journey of speculation.

One side of his genius places Hudson in the company of Sir Thomas Browne—he is a twentieth century Browne, not at all a nineteenth century Browne—like the authors of "Guesses at Truth." Browne had a penchant for skulls and apocryphal science, Hudson for birds and animism; Browne's prose is artful and Hudson's naïve, yet each is the vehicle of an attractive personality in which poetry and humour, wisdom and a touch of the cynic commingle. Certainly they both had the eye and the ear of a poet, although in the seventeenth century magistrate who could condemn a "witch" to death the sense of wonder ran into weird channels of superstition, while the scientific as well as loving observation of our modern naturalist leads to a perpetually fruitful triumph of the imagination over science. Triumphant intuition will be Hudson's outstanding distinction. See how weighty are his criticisms, *en passant* as it were, of Darwin and Spencer, when he is discussing the origins of music and speech. See how challenging is this last section of his last book, the "Conclusions" which Mr. Morley Roberts laboriously pieced together after Hudson's death. "The Sense of Beauty," Santayana's beautifully written piece of sophistry, is exposed by Hudson at its weakest place, where Professor Santayana treats art and the sense of beauty as a decorative growth on the rocky surface of life, and where he traces its efflorescence to the sex-impulse. With regard to this the present writer, being much impressed by Hudson's consistent emphasis of the universality of the sense of beauty, decided to seek the opinion of one who, if any, ought to be able to judge between Santayana and Hudson—Mr. Havelock Ellis.

"I certainly agree with Hudson," said Mr. Ellis, "that the sense of beauty is not always a growth of the sex-impulse, and that it is a fundamental thing. But when Hudson describes birds on the bough leaping into the air on a spring morning for sheer joy of life, as he does, I think he is going beyond what is justifiable. Certainly all the authorities are against him in ascribing such a thing to the sex-impulse." Well, begging Mr. Havelock Ellis's pardon, there is at least one reader of Hudson who, although long an admirer of Mr. Havelock Ellis's own genius, yet prefers to follow Hudson the whole way, notwithstanding all "the authorities," for Hudson was a poet who understood science well enough to know when the poet's intuition becomes the one safe guide.

R. L. MÉGROZ.

* "A Hind in Richmond Park." By W. H. Hudson. 16s. (Dent.)

MEMORIES.*

"Let us talk a little of lighter things" is the motto inscribed at the beginning of the volume before us. "The following pages of adventures should be looked upon and read as though one had chanced to meet the author at a country-house party," goes the foreword.

We hasten to say we should like very much to meet the writer at a country house! We see revealed in his sparkling pages a rich capability for appreciation and enjoyment and a friendly attitude towards all men.

Mr. Ainslie gives us a sketch of his early life, from his birth in Paris, where his father was secretary to Lord Cowley's Embassy, through Eton, through Oxford, to a diplomatic career. At the close of a graphic description of a costume ball at Rome we find the comment: "An unforgettable evening and morning this. It has made me incurious of all other costume balls, past, present and to

* "Adventures, Social and Literary." By Douglas Ainslie. 21s. (Unwin.)

come . . . the present writer feels he has been to all the parties that have ever been given in London, Paris or Rome, and met all the interesting people ! "

It is quite evident that Mr. Ainslie has been lucky as regards this world's goods and this world's opportunities. How especially admirable, then, is it to reflect that it was he who, no doubt a little satiated by the fullness of material life, discovered and revealed to England the treasures of Croce's teaching. " Hundreds of professors and students had passed through Croce's city for years without apparently being struck in any way by the splendour of the new thought, upon which our literary critics have since based themselves, from Mr. Clutton Brock and Mr. Walkley downwards."

There is not much of Croce in these pages. But, says Mr. Ainslie in one passage : " I may legitimately refer to the excellent quality of the talk that I have enjoyed at his house." Conversation began out of doors and was carried on in the open by a round dozen of friends accustomed to dodge the traffic. We hear of Croce's fine, white, delicate hands, and wonderful, piercing grey eyes.

These chapters fairly scintillate with famous names, such as Henry James, Lord Charles Beresford, Marcel Proust. There are many capital tales, and Mr. Ainslie, who is obviously inclined to believe in visions, gives the following little ghost story, supposed to be the shortest in the world. It was told him by a Jesuit priest :

" A lady awoke from sleep, feeling frightened ; it was pitch dark ; she was about to reach out for the matches, but before she could do so *the box was placed in her hand* ! "

Had we space we should like to quote the anecdote of Paderewski and his forecast of the Great War, also the impressions of Swinburne : " He always gave me the impression of two things : a great red-plumed eagle, pinioned and unable to rise from the ground more than a few feet." We should like to quote as well the lion story with its truly British heroine. But we counsel the reader to scan for himself this exceedingly spirited survey of a life lived vigorously.

C. M.

REALISM AND REALITY.*

These four novels group themselves in seemly accordance by virtue of their unlikeness. There is more realism than reality in two of them ; the other two just tell us about life, and have this in common that, though one of them takes us back into the fourteenth century and to a country and among people far away, whilst the other belongs to to-day and the homely people of our own country-side, they join in expressing just the same emotions, the same concerns of everyday, the same needs and aspirations, moods and passions of humanity all the world over, as it was in the beginning and ever shall be even unto the end of the world.

I began by disliking the title of Mrs. Mary Webb's book. I couldn't, as we say, fix it—until I had read the little old rhyme right in the forefront of her enterprise, and then it seemed the only possible title. So you must get the book and first of all memorise that little old rhyme. As a matter of fact it will memorise itself, and you won't want to memorise the book, anyway : that will also memorise itself. It is just as real as life. The people in it are the people we know, the people we are, the people we love or hate or make the best of, but in any case have to put up with. On the whole, a most lovable crowd ! Yes, even the villain of the piece compels that pity which is at least akin to love. He is the sort of scoundrel we can none of us help liking, until he is found out. And then, despite his wildness and wickedness, his brutal cruelty and mean unscrupulousness, we are somehow sorry for him, because he might have played a man's part if only he had faced life instead of funking it.

* " Seven for a Secret." By Mary Webb. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)—" The Garland." By Sigrid Undset. 7s. 6d. (Gyldendal.)—" The Briary Bush." By Floyd Dell. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)—" Quest Sinister." By S. P. B. Mais. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)

This is one of the best novels by a woman—and I don't mean merely a latter-day woman novelist—that I have ever read. To begin with—and end with—there is a man in it : a real, live, average, decent, sinful man. There are other men in it too, of course, and they are none the less alive ; but this man I have never before met in any woman's book : the kind of man that men know and like. That is, first and last, Mary Webb's great achievement : this ploughman-poet, corduroy-clad farm-labourer, Robert Rideout. Even his poetry is real poetry. And the story about him and Gillian Lovekin, and her magnificent windbag of a father, and that poor tool Jonathan, and the splendid Mrs. Makepeace, and . . . in fine, there is not one lay figure in this gallery of authentic studies from life. " Seven for a Secret " is a novel that will thrill and enchain alike the most and the least sophisticated of readers. It is replete with beauty, wit and humour, strong meat and yet dainty fare, garnished with sweetest sprigs of fancy and altogether satisfying. Not just a promising book but a finished performance : a fine book, finely planned and finely done.

" The Garland," beautifully translated from the beautiful Norwegian of Sigrid Undset, is of the same substance as " Seven for a Secret," if not in the same key. It is a simple tale of the simple lives and loves of the farm-folk of Scandinavia, six or seven hundred years ago. And yet it is with difficulty we realise that it is not about familiar things of to-day. It is all so human and real. Well, of course it is, because human nature is always the same fruit everywhere and everywhen, though it grows on such a big tree.

The last two books on my list, " The Briary Bush " and " Quest Sinister," are both what is called, I believe, *ultra*-modern. They are both concerned with that peculiar type of young man and young woman who somehow remind me of the small boy with his first watch : only it is their hearts they are for ever taking out and examining and passing round and talking about. There is some real good stuff in them, and especially in " The Briary Bush," which indeed only just misses being first-class by its undue insistence on things that don't really matter much. But perhaps if I had read this author's previous book, " Moon-Calf," to which this present book is a sequel, I should understand the drift of it better. As it is, I don't quite get to grips with young Felix Fay, and it doesn't help much that the author himself is inclined to give up the riddle of his women's inconsistencies, and leave it at that. This is not in any way to deny the power of the book. It held me and kept me interested from the first word to the last. It has given me some very fascinating glimpses into the soul of youth—the same old-young, egotistical, introspective, egregious youth—on the other side as well as on this side of the Atlantic. Its cleverness is unbounded. Its style is neat and crisp. Mr. Floyd Dell only wants something a little more elemental in the way of a theme to do something really notable. As it is, he has undoubtedly done a novel that was well worth doing, if only for its originality of concept and sureness of touch.

Every now and then I was on the point of shutting up Mr. Mais's latest novel, sending it back to my editor and asking him to get somebody else to review it. It gave me intermittent headache. The general tone of it has the effect of a lot of priggish, underbred people talking in a shrill falsetto at the top of their voices in a stuffy room. To quote from Mr. Floyd Dell's book : " Quest Sinister " is frankly boring because of its inane preoccupation with " stupid women, foolish men, mechanical noise and laughter, boozy humour and the touch of stale, jaded, weary flesh. . . ." All that mere incidence our author might have packed into six pages—Kipling would have dismissed it in six words—and so got it out of the way of the real story which only begins in the last chapter, when Mr. Mais does suddenly pass from sham realism to stark reality and shows that he has the root of the matter in him, if only he would leave off being so frightfully clever, and start observing and thinking for himself.

EDWIN PUGH.

MELLONEY HOLTSPUR.*

In all that Mr. Masefield writes, even though it be the vivacious narrative of a fox-hunt or a steeplechase, there is, implicit or explicit, a sort of brooding, questing idealism. Always he is passionate for that "one beauty," in search of which, as he long ago said, he has "wandered far": the beauty which shall prevail over those base and ugly elements in life to which he is sensitive to the point of agony. Of this idealism his new play, "Melloney Holtspur," is a more than usually elaborate expression. Its motto, I know not where found—"The consecrated things are wiser than our virtue"—is a key whereby we may interpret, if not quite certainly, its rather obscure symbolism. For the "consecrated things" include, if they are not co-extensive with, Mr. Masefield's "beauty," which again would seem to be synonymous with St. Paul's "charity." "Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. . . . When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." In the house of Holtspur there was knowledge of the evil done and tongues to speak of it, and prophecies of evil to come, but they were all stultified and silenced by the charity which is another name for love. That consecrated thing proved wiser, and stronger, than the merely human virtue which humanly seeks vengeance on its opposite.

That, at any rate, is my reading of this play, in which the dead and the living mingle in a manner which, were it to be put on the stage, would one cannot help feeling be confusing, if not a little ludicrous, to the audience. For Lonny Copshrews, brilliant artist and unscrupulous libertine, and Melloney Holtspur, his victim, have been dead some twenty years when Bunny Mento, son of Melloney's sister and present lord of Holtspur, meets and falls in love with Lenda Copshrews, Lonny's daughter. But their ghosts walk in and out of their portraits (Lonny's work) which hang on either side of the armour of Sir Tirrold, the founder of the house, in the hall at Holtspur; and their old tragedy is re-enacted before our eyes. When Lenda arrives at Holtspur, and she and Bunny have declared their mutual passion, Melloney, desiring vengeance, is determined to thwart them, and she is helped by the death-bed confession of a woman who had been Lonny's mistress and tells Lady Mento, Bunny's mother, of a theft, perpetrated by her and her lover, of certain Holtspur jewels. Lonny pleads for his daughter, but Melloney is pitiless, and the Man in Armour (Sir Tirrold), who has a habit of oracular utterance, refuses him comfort. Only by atonement can Lonny escape the consequences of his ill-doing, the visitation of his sin upon his child. Of how this atonement is to be made the Man in Armour does not vouchsafe an explanation. It is, indeed, not to be made by Lonny, bereft of all powers but the "power to suffer"; but it is comprised in the love of Bunny and Lenda, against which the old curse and Lady Mento's hostility are of no avail. The stolen jewels, moreover, are found to have been restored to their secret hiding-place by Lonny himself—he had only pawned them for relief in a temporary embarrassment—Melloney, herself enlightened by the sight of the lovers' constancy, enlightens her sister in a dream; and not only are Bunny and Lenda to have their desire, but Lonny and Melloney also find reconciliation and happiness on their ghostly plane.

MELLONEY: We were made for each other, from of old, we two, and have been through a dark time apart. But the night is over now, Lonny. Won't you come into the light with me?

LONNY: My sin was against the spirit that makes the light.

MELLONEY: It is forgiven, by that spirit.

LONNY: Then I think all suffering must be at an end throughout the world.

MELLONEY: For ever, and for ever, and for ever.

[*They draw together and become transfigured as they kiss.*]

THE MAN IN ARMOUR: Another death is dead!"

* "Melloney Holtspur." By John Masefield. 6s. (Heinemann.)

So ends a play of which, though there are certain things in it which strike one, on a superficial reading, as rather absurd, one cannot but acknowledge the fine purpose. It is written in the nervous economical prose which Mr. Masefield long ago fashioned for his dramatic dialogue and uses now with a surer, less staccato, touch than in the days of Nan and Pompey.

FRANCIS BICKLEY.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF COUNTRY LIFE.*

At a period when "the Union" signifies something very different from the meaning attached to the dread words half a century ago, and when even agricultural labourers and field-workers belong to it, it is permissible to wonder whether the countryman as a type is dying out. A thousand

Woodcut by Stephen Bone.
From "A Farmer's Life" (Jonathan Cape).

pities if the kind of worker so clearly pictured, so thoroughly comprehended by Mr. George Bourne in his books should ever disappear. Plain John Smith, farmer, is the fine old stock. "Though he had been brought up as a potter, his family on the father's side—provincials in the best sense—had been of yeoman breed; pious, industrious nobodies. They belonged to that element of quiet strength in England which furnished no subjects for novels, no excitements for lawyer or judge or politician, no romance for poets, but kept the country orderly and industrious . . . the rustic English, the able nobodies who had dwelt in their villages and mowed their hay and thatched their barns for centuries."

No other author, expressing the varied phases of the English country-side, seems to possess Mr. Bourne's genial penetration. The chapter entitled "Two Harvesters" is a perfect impression in its way—even an idyll—though with its creator we must regret the touch of "railways" at its finish, railways being rather out of place in an idyll of harvest time.

It pleases the reader to realise that the people in this story—for it is a story, told with side-chats and delightfully

* "A Farmer's Life." By George Bourne. With woodcuts by Stephen Bone. 10s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

illuminating comments—were real people, with names and dates given; and we are grateful to Mr. Bourne for his preface, which sets the note and gives the district life and actuality. The southern counties of England have no finer exponent, and the conjunction of Mr. Stephen Bone's woodcuts with a series of sketches in prose such as this is a happy idea.

W. L. R.

PAPINI'S ESSAYS.*

The author's name and works have been until now almost unknown in English-speaking countries. The late Professor Wm. James refers to Papini in his volume on "Pragmatism" in 1907, and I have recently noticed two or three other references. But there can be no doubt that in the course of the next few years Papini's name will be as well known amongst us as the names of Eucken, Bergson and Croce. He has remarkable qualities which cannot be designated as anything less than brilliant. He has read widely, not only in the fields of Literature, but also in those of Art and Philosophy. As a stylist he ranks with the highest of the moderns, differing from most literary writers by his penetrating psychological and metaphysical insight—an insight which handles the most difficult and abstruse subject in the lightest possible manner.

The material presented in this volume comprises a kind of microcosm of "Four and Twenty Minds," past and present. In the course of the few pages given to each writer, Papini is able to get at the nucleus of the writer's message, disregarding the peripheral elements, and plunging at once into the very heart of the problem. He may be said to present here the writer's message (and most of these writers have a message) as consisting in seeing the universal in the particular, and in depicting individual life as carrying within itself essential elements of the whole drama of the cosmos. The "Four and Twenty Minds" are very different in their outlook upon the universe and life, yet Papini manages, I think rightly, to find in their writings a few of the great problems turned over and viewed from various standpoints, all which standpoints are, after all, wonderfully similar.

The essay on "The Unknown Man" shows how men whose very names are unknown succeeded in making the most remarkable contributions the world has received: "those who remain anonymous and unknown have done far more for us than all the men whose fame fills biographical dictionaries. The fairest fancies, the simplest melodies, the most enduring phrases, the fundamental inventions, are the works of the Unknown Man, to whom historians and panegyrists give no heed."

In the short chapter on Dante, the writer points out that the "Divine Comedy" was conceived in order to present God as the Being "who not only enlightens and saves mankind, but who, on a terrible distant day, will judge the quick and the dead." This idea of God as Judge rather than as Teacher had been neglected by the Catholics of Dante's day and for a long period previous to that. "Dante felt that his genius was a divine investiture which gave him the right to judge those who had lived before his time."

Papini has a very warm corner in his heart for Leonardo da Vinci. He does not care for Leonardo's science. It is Leonardo's canvas that interests Papini; Leonardo the scientist is dead and forgotten, but Leonardo the artist "is still living, and very much alive; he is a part of myself a precious fragment of my spirit."

Space forbids me dealing with these four and twenty minds in detail, but every chapter illumines some fundamental problem of life and existence in a new kind of way. Berkeley (contrary to the opinion of historians of Philosophy) is presented as making all Philosophy subsidiary to a defence of the Christian religion. Papini has translated Berkeley's works into Italian. Spencer is viewed unsympathetically, and Papini's opinion of him resembles the opinion of James and Ward: "Spencer, a middle-class spirit without courage and without audacity, remains dangling in the limbo of antinomies, wavering between the necessity of government and the lamentation of the oppressed. He was the pedantic Hamlet of a half-intelligent and compromising *bourgeoisie*."

Many readers will be glad of the sympathetic and clear chapter on the teaching of Dr. F. C. S. Schiller of Oxford. A lucid account is given of Schiller's books. He is shown as standing for some great ideas which need recovery in our day and generation: "The origin of those concepts which we tend to regard as the eternal armour of reason is purely practical and utilitarian. That which has proved most serviceable has asserted itself and has survived. Everything else has been thrown into the enormous waste-basket of the insignificant and the erroneous." There is no doubt that Schiller's writings are exercising an enormous influence on many young minds to-day, and all this influence is to the good.

Nietzsche is viewed sympathetically, and rightly, I think. Walt Whitman, as the poet of the universal, has exercised such a deep influence upon Papini, that he finds himself unable to criticise him. The chapter on Croce comes to the same conclusion as that on Hegel: "Croce offers nothing save a string of identities which, in the last analysis, mean that art is art and is nothing else."

English readers will be surprised to read Papini's remarks about "the passing" of Shakespeare, in the chapter on Hamlet. Remy de Gourmont is regarded as one of the greatest soldiers and heroes of pure thought. Dean Swift is looked on as one of the very greatest figures of literature. There are two long chapters on Oriani and "Don Quixote," both of which are fresh and important. The short chapter on "William Tell" is interesting. One of the most important of the essays is that on the Chinese philosopher, Kwang-tze. The chapter on Maeterlinck is more scathing than any other in the book: "He is a parlour occultist, a moralist for old ladies, a syrupy philosopher, a friar without faith, a scientist without cleverness, a poet without imagination, a casuist for idle consciences, a fakir of facile marvels. To read him after reading a great philosopher is like smoking opium after climbing a mountain. To read him after reading a great poet is like drinking a cup of camomile after a goblet of old wine."

The final chapter is that of the author on himself—as he is depicted by his enemies. The whole book is of extreme importance, and Professor Wilkins's translation is excellent. He has preserved a vast amount of the Italian "relish."

W. TUDOR JONES.

* "Four and Twenty Minds." By Giovanni Papini. $2.50 net. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company.)

THE '45.

The reconstruction of historical episodes by means of contemporary materials possesses qualities of considerable attraction and importance. The danger lies in the limited horizon of individual experience and the natural frailty of human observation and human conclusions. In other words, the production of volumes like these* is invaluable in the hands of an expert like Professor Terry, but a veritable two-edged sword in ordinary practice.

The four periods he covers in the narratives of contemporaries are the Jacobite risings of 1708, 1715, 1719 and 1745. Of these the '45 was the final and imperishable epic in the fortunes of the House of Stuart, but it is remarkable considering the unfading romance of that rebellion how vague is the general understanding of the close connection between one Highland insurrection and another, the ebbing of the Jacobite hope and the causes of its final debacle. The '45 has indeed attained to that almost inaccessible height of glamour where, like the wonder of Joan of Arc, all the disillusionment, the dubious aspirations and ultimate denials of its protagonists have been forgotten.

* "The Jacobites and the Union." Edited by C. S. Terry. 10s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)—"The Forty-five." Edited by C. S. Terry. 8s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

Professor Terry in these two volumes achieves at least one admirable purpose. He makes it possible to follow contemporary thought not simply over one campaign, but over the successive and unsuccessful attempts to regain Great Britain for the Stuarts. He reveals, in other words, the astonishing spirit of determination and the acceptance of disaster and exile which lend to all forlorn endeavour a sense of pathos and beauty. In these records the amazing temperamental inadequacy of the Stuarts strikes one anew. So steeped were they in a blind faith in the divine right of their cause that practical counsels seemed only practical so long as they hastened towards a crown, and points of generalship were criticised unless they aimed at St. James's. The Stuarts could never quite believe that their English subjects, i.e. the irreverent British Army, would fire a shot once the battle commenced. Their successes for that peculiar reason never elated them, but their defeats were positively paralysing. In their philosophy was no real spirit of adventure or hazard, but a kind of religious intolerance sweeping aside the more dubious reflections of persons pledged to bring ruin to their heads and lands and dependents at the arbitrary summons of a discomfited royal line.

The chronicle of these risings, as it is so neatly and judiciously linked together by Professor Terry, illustrates the persistence of the Jacobites, but it hardly explains the romance that has obscured the futility of it all and only left us the fragrance. To be frank, the early risings in support of that melancholy and belated person, James Francis Edward, come upon occasions very near the ludicrous. His tardy arrivals to lead his forces, and the depressing effect of his presence upon his most ardent supporters have precious little glamour. If he strikes us to-day as somewhat bleak, how very much more realistic must his countenance have seemed then! "I must not conceal," says one writer, "that when we saw the Person who we called our King, we found ourselves not at all animated by his Presence, and if he was disappointed in us, we were tenfold more so in him. . . . Our men began to despise him; some asked if he could speak; his Countenance look'd extremely heavy. . . . I am sure the Figure he made dejected us, and had he sent us but 5,000 Men of good Troops and never come among us, we had done other Things than we have now done."

Prince Charles Edward was admittedly very different stuff to his poor father. He was of good appearance, hardy, and young. Moreover, he threw himself with more spirit than decency upon the mercies of an adventurous race. Here were all the sinews of romantic fortune. What then was the secret of the '45? Professor Terry is perfectly impartial in his records. He makes it beyond dispute that there was inspired an initial and tragic impulse of duty just as later on succeeded a deepening shadow of controversy, ingratitude, suspicion, and royal stupidity. And once more at the crisis of his fate a Stuart overwhelmed (at Culloden) by a disaster so unsuspected as to seem the stroke of God, threw everything to the winds, bade his faithful followers disperse to await the scaffold, and set out upon a flight that will be sung and remembered long after great campaigns and epochs have passed into the silence.

The explanation is still wanting. Princes like Monmouth have taken to their heels and no one has shed a tear an hour, much less a century, after. Princes have been killed and their dust is no quieter than their memory. Whereas Prince Charlie lived on for forty years, a disappointed, grumpy old man, forgotten and unvisited, and when his death came the flutter was very small and rather musty and old-world. Long before the vast number of his followers had died in obscurity or neglect, or had returned to muse upon it all over the candles and the wine. By the end of the eighteenth century the '45 was like enough to go down as a minor episode in English history and linger in a handful of legends and old wives' tales. But suddenly there rose a solitary spiral of melody that, gathering in beauty and undiminished pathos, made of Jacobitism a thing of immortality and wonder, It meant that the literary revival was an infinitely more lasting movement than any rising of the '45, because it never ventured further than the hearts of men. It was not by claymores but by such songs as those of Carolina Nairne, daughter of the Jacobite laird of "the auld hoose" of Gask, and by the novels of Sir Walter Scott that Prince Charlie was at last to enter his kingdom.

FREDERICK WATSON.

BUCHAN'S HISTORY OF THE WAR.*

There are many noble works of history in our English tongue: among the masterpieces future generations will surely number that "History of the Great War" which Mr. Buchan has now completed with his fourth volume. It may stand, without too much humility, near to Gibbon. It will rank assuredly with the classics, with Napier, Kinglake, Macaulay and Trevelyan, and none of them could claim pre-eminence. None of them brought so immense a subject into so magnificently adequate a synthesis, at once magistrally clear in its grand outline and vividly pictured in its essential detail. Only "The Dynasts" is a pertinent comparison, in theme and treatment; and "The Dynasts" did not pretend to be exact history. From the myriad historians in every language who for the past seven years have been pouring out more or less competent studies of that immense world-conflict which transcends our imaginations, participants in it though we were, Mr. Buchan stands apart. He is without a rival. Not in any language has any history appeared which can for a moment dare comparison with his. None has his lofty vision, eagle-like above that mighty turmoil of humanity at clash on three continents and every ocean, at once wide-ranging and narrowly acute. No other historian has yet related the stupendous drama in a style so adequate to the complexity and the majesty of the theme, now vivid with a highly realised presentment of action in almost every variety of setting that the world can offer, now passionlessly clear in its analysis of the forces that moved multitudes of men to corporate deeds of heroism or suicidal madness, now penetratingly sympathetic in its portraits of the individuals tossed into prominence on the storm they had to endeavour to direct, now philosophically calm in its estimate of the transcendent causes at issue, rising when the occasion demands it to a vibrant eloquence that has nothing of the speciousness of rhetoric, held always in a dignified restraint. It is almost great poetry. It is certainly great literature.

This fourth volume deals with that last crisis of the war which shaped itself in 1917 and came to final climax in the ebb and flow of 1918. Its head-line, "From Caporetto to the Armistice," states the theme whose broad outlines are familiar to the world. But one reads its analysis in these pages with a new freshness of accurately adjusted perception. The last act of the colossal drama is made, despite the turmoil of its closing scenes, vividly comprehensible. Never was the debacle in Russia, that fourth-act *peripeteia* which threw the fortunes of the Allies into suspense to a breathlessly watching world, so clearly and at the same time so dispassionately presented for our understanding. Caporetto, its first sequel, is described with an unbiased exactitude where the entire episode falls into correct perspective.

For Englishmen the chief interest of the volume must be in its presentment of the last year in France, that year which commenced with Cambrai and finished with the Armistice at Mons. Beside the final struggle which opened on March 21st, 1918, and produced at last that unity of command which gave us victory, every other episode of the war falls into second place.

Of all those vicissitudes, in which the tragedy of the Fifth Army is the most dramatic, Mr. Buchan gives a conspicuously clear, frank and unbiased account. A tendency to be unduly gentle with the British High Command, which was a blemish on his third volume, has here

* "A History of the Great War." By John Buchan. In four volumes. Each 25s. net. Vol. IV. (Nelson.)

no place. For many years yet, protagonists of one personality or other involved in that disaster will come forward with plausible versions exculpating their own client and inculpating some other; for years yet the military and the civilians will quarrel over the respective apportionment of responsibility, but it does not seem probable that future historians will have much to add either to Mr. Buchan's description of the event or his criticism of the causes.

Unique in the literature of the war is the clarity of his study of the final campaign by which Foch shattered the German armies. We all accept the fact that Foch won the war for us. Mr. Buchan shows precisely, with a sympathetic insight into the great commander's mind only possible to a writer permeated with the essential principles of war, how he won it. It is impossible to quote adequately. A few lines may show something of the clear temper of mind in which he reviews the immense conflict of the climax:

"But self-discipline and discretion would have been of no value unless the plan for the *coup de grâce* had been found. Such a plan Foch had prepared, and it is on this plan that his claim to pre-eminence as a leader depends. Since he became Allied Commander-in-Chief he had made many mistakes; by his slowness in reinforcing Haig he had invited a disaster on the Lys; he had been completely surprised by the German attack on the Aisne heights; in the disposition of his forces, as in the way he mixed up the British and the French armies, he had often been clumsy. But in the major business of war he did not err. He had that first quality of the superior mind, the power to select amid a welter of confused alternatives, the capacity to make a simple syllogism, which, once it is made, seems easy and inevitable, but which, before it is made, is in the power only of the greatest. No epoch-making step in history, whether in war or in statecraft, seems otherwise than inevitable in the retrospect. It is like great poetry, compounded into something immortal out of the simplest ingredients by the alchemy of genius."

No review so brief as this can do justice to this great history. But those will be few who, when they come to the end of those moving and finely-imagined pages which conclude a summary of the whole, do not feel that something of the lines above-quoted applies to the book in which they find themselves. It is written with "the alchemy of genius."

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

CRABB ROBINSON'S REMINISCENCES.*

In 1869 there was published in three volumes the "Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson," selected and edited by Thomas Sadler, Ph.D. A second edition followed, and in 1872 there appeared a third edition, with corrections and additions, in two volumes. The work is now out of print, and though obtainable from second-hand booksellers, it is not to be bought cheaply. The MSS. from which it was compiled consist of: (1) Brief journals reaching as far as 1810, inclusive; (2) a regular and full home Diary begun in 1811, and continued till within five days of Robinson's death (he died February 5th, 1867, in his ninety-third year), forming thirty-five closely-written volumes; (3) about thirty volumes of journals of tours; (4) reminiscences reaching down to the year 1843, inclusive; (5) miscellaneous papers; (6) a large number of letters. This extensive material is now lodged in University Hall, Gordon Square, London, forming one of the many attractions of the valuable "Dr. Williams's library." Dr. Sadler stated that his selections did not, "as a rough guess," amount to more than a twenty-fifth or thirtieth part of the whole.

The "Diary," as stated above, was begun in 1811, and continued daily practically up to Robinson's death. The "Reminiscences" were not begun till the writer had nearly reached his seventieth year, and, as Sadler remarks, "Even if they had been written in the freshness of his memory and in the fullness of his mental vigour, they would still hardly have had equal value with the daily record, which breathes the air of the scenes and incidents to which it relates." When engaged on these reminiscences and having written his record up to 1810 it occurred to him that it would be more convenient if he combined in one continuous article all his reminiscences of Coleridge, Wordsworth and Lamb.

It is these reminiscences of Coleridge, Wordsworth and Lamb, together with extracts from the "Diary" and "Reminiscences" of Robinson's frequent interviews with the poet-artist, William Blake, that Professor Edith Morley has transcribed.

In compiling his record, Robinson had recourse to his diary, copying the extracts and in many instances adding to those from memory. On one occasion he is stated to have said he never had any memory, but in the "Reminiscences," he writes: "I have a very distinct recollection of more than I put in my journal, as is often the case." The latter statement appears to contradict the former, but even if true the daily record would have more value as to facts. The new work, however, is of much interest, and it is certainly convenient to have such a publication in its very handy form, even though there may not be much that is actually new for those to whom Sadler's work is a familiar friend. In addition to the "Reminiscences" and the Blake extracts from the "Diary," Miss Morley claims to have published for the first time a complete account of the quarrel between Wordsworth and Coleridge from the "Diary" and letters. This is, perhaps, the most interesting contribution, though much of it appears to have been printed before, if reliance may be placed on a statement of the late E. H. Coleridge in his edition of the "Letters of S. T. Coleridge" that the extracts from H. C. Robinson's Diary (May 3rd–10th, 1812) were published in Professor Knight's "Life of W. Wordsworth," a reference to which work cannot at present be made by the present writer.

Crabb Robinson's acquaintance with Coleridge, Wordsworth and Lamb was of long standing. He states it was through his friend, Mrs. Clarkson (wife of the Abolitionist) that he was introduced to them. He appears to have known Charles Lamb about 1806, Wordsworth two years later and Coleridge in the latter part of 1810. With all three he remained on terms of intimacy, especially with Wordsworth and Lamb, whose memories he ever held in affectionate remembrance. He was attracted to Coleridge less on account of his character than his genius, but he played a good friend's part in his zealous endeavours to bring about a reconciliation between Wordsworth and Coleridge, which he would probably not have attempted if he had not had a certain amount of affection for the latter. His labours were successful in uniting the two friends. One incident in the "Reminiscences" is, we think, new. On October 20th, 1811, Coleridge was asked to repeat from "Christabel," but was unable to recollect the words. "This," Robinson says, "I had witnessed once before"; and in the margin of the "Diary" there is a note in shorthand: "Both times he was affected by liquor." A further note adds: "I heard C. say 'I have been ill with liquor, but I was never intoxicated. Liquor affects my stomach, not my head.'"

Miss Morley might, we think, have usefully added to her notes, which are not very extensive. She passes over misstatements made by Robinson, and also one or two misprints made by the diarist. On page 138 a sentence from a letter from Coleridge to Robinson runs thus: "Charles or Mary Lamb can inform you of the infamous manner in which I have been swindled by the Reverend Curtis and his accomplices." In a foot-note Miss Morley states she is unable to explain this sentence. A reference to the "Letters of Coleridge" and Dykes Campbell's "Life of Coleridge" would have enabled her to do so, and a careful study of the same authorities would have prevented such a statement (page 93) as: "Coleridge's movements for the next year or two [1808–10] are not very certain."

There is a satisfactory index for which we are grateful, and a most delightful character sketch of old "Crabby."

S. BUTTERWORTH.

* "Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, etc.; being Selections from the Remains of Henry Crabb Robinson." Edited by Edith J. Morley. 7s. 6d. net. (Longmans.)

FROM THREE ANGLES.*

MR. FRANK SWINNERTON.

It would not be surprising if "The Three Lovers" proved the most popular novel Mr. Swinnerton has written. Nor would it be surprising to learn that when he sat writing it he meant it to be that. It carries the charming Patricia safely through adventures, that so easily might have been disastrous, with two of her lovers, and leaves her happy at last in the arms of the third. She was all in love with the bright, dashing young Harry Greenlees and keen to marry him, but was repelled as soon as he made it clear to her that he wanted only a temporary union. She was strangely attracted to the loathsome, "sublimely and ruthlessly selfish" Monty Rosenberg, till, after getting her to dine alone at his house with him, he outrageously and forcibly embraced her and, resentful and disgusted, she fell back on the staid, reticent, reliable Edgar Mayne, and all her troubles were apparently over. The characters, even the minor figures in Monty's motley circle, are brilliantly realised; they are made human and alive; yet at times they act more as you might expect them to on a stage to please an audience than as you would expect them to in actual life. The characterisation, descriptions, dialogue are wholly admirable, and the story is the kind of story that has never failed to appeal to all sorts of readers since Pamela, sorely tried but never yielding, achieved, at length, the reward of virtue. There is no denying that "The Three Lovers" captures your interest and keeps it, and there are not too many story-tellers nowadays who have mastered the art of doing that.

MRS. M. LEONORA EYLES.

There is a deep knowledge of human suffering in Mrs. Eyles's novels, and a burning desire to remedy the social and other evils from which such suffering results, that give impressiveness and power to them, even when they mar the art of them a little. It is difficult to believe that any mining town could be so completely squalid, and the poor of it so steeped in uncleanness and immorality as was the miserable Lower Shellpit she pictures in "Hidden Lives." One suspects she has gathered into one place horrors of human existence she has seen in many, and this, though it drives home sociological facts to which the comfortable majority prefer to shut their eyes, overloads a particular picture with more blackness than of right belongs to it. There Helen Clevion, the heroine, is a lady doctor, and you are asked to see life too much from her medical point of view; she is, moreover, a psycho-analyst, and her interpretations of her patients' dreams, the general pathological reading of life, does not seem quite convincing. This is particularly so in the case of that contemptible creature, the curate, Francis Reay, and his lapse with Dr. Helen after he has become irresponsible. But there are fine things in this book; Mrs. Eyles is so evidently in earnest, so profoundly sincere, that she grips and moves you by the very intensity of her passionate pity for human weaknesses. If she will abandon the pathological study of mankind (and the next generation will probably discover that our pathology is all wrong) and turn to the novelist's proper business of telling a merely human story of merely human beings, I believe she will write a novel that shall be great as well as impressive.

JOHN D. FITZGERALD.

In "The Ring Valley" you have a story that is at once realistic and romantic, and the romance, being the vivid, violent, picturesque romance of earlier days in Australia, is merely part of its realism. It neither shirks unpleasant sides of life nor over-emphasises them. Born in Australia, Mr. Fitzgerald was over here in the eighties, and worked with Mr. John Burns in the great Dock Strike. Thereafter, he played a prominent part in Australian politics and was for many years a member of the Sydney House of Representatives. But there are no politics in "The Ring Valley," though it is to some extent autobiographical—he has put into it much of his younger experiences and woven a true romance of the bush, the gold fields, settlement life and circus life that, for freshness and originality of character and the vigorous stir of events, is only equalled by the best stories of Australia's greatest novelist, Rolf Boldrewood.

AUTHUR RUTLAND.

* "The Three Lovers." By Frank Swinnerton. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)—"Hidden Lives." By M. Leonora Eyles. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)—"The Ring Valley." By John D. Fitzgerald. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

A NEW STATE.*

Some time ago we had the pleasure of giving a short notice of Mr. Henry Baerlein's book, "A Difficult Frontier," in which some of the problems connected with the little-known group of countries situated on and near the Adriatic Sea were elucidated. The present volumes are concerned with the same quarter of the Near East, and we do not know of any writer who could deal with so complex a subject in so thoroughly competent a manner. Even a critic possessing no first hand knowledge of it is convinced, by abundant internal evidence, that Mr. Baerlein's exposition has force of character behind it to support and interpret the results of keen and continuous personal observation. For this reason we shall not so much criticise this very full book as give an indication, for the sake of readers who desire to extend their knowledge of the people and lands within these very difficult frontiers, of its general content and method.

A certain amount of early history is given in the first volume, in order that the entangled relations between Italy, Hungary, Serbia and the other nations and races may be explained. Without this the atmosphere of continuous intrigue which seems inseparable from the Balkans would not be appreciated; and even after reading the author's intensely interesting story of kings and religions, of Turkish, Russian, Magyar influences, of politics compared with which our British affairs appear clear as noonday, we remain to some extent bewildered. This is not Mr. Baerlein's fault, however. He does his best to straighten things out for us so that we may follow the subsequent portion—and by far the larger one—of his two volumes, which is devoted to events of more recent years. With Chapter V the European War is reached; the Austrians invade Serbia, to be flung back across the northern bank of the Save on August 24th, 1914, "after twelve terrible days." Then, for those who like excitement, personal glimpses of historic rulers, and illuminating comment, the best part of the long, involved story begins. Take, for an example, this note on King Alexander of Serbia:

> "All through the war, Alexander, the Prince Regent—for King Peter felt himself, on account of his age and his rheumatism, unequal to anything save the personal encouragement of his soldiers in the trenches—throughout the war Alexander was with his army. In his eloquent proclamations one sees the student; on the battle-field he conquered his shyness. And now he is a truly democratic King, at whose table very often is some non-commissioned officer or private whose acquaintance he made in the war. . . . The men are well aware that their own peasant costume, with the sandals, is admissible at Court—even at a ball you see some fine old peasant, who is perhaps a deputy, in his thick brown homespun with black braiding, breeches very baggy at the seat and closely fitting round the legs; as he comes in he knocks the snow from his sandals, and strides, perfectly at ease, across the Turkish carpets. . . ."

Many official documents throwing strong light on the conflict are reproduced—an aspect of the book which we can merely mention. Phenomena of communism are described, and the "lessons of the Montenegrin Elections," and a hundred other matters, often with much vivacity; and with Chapter VIII of the second volume begins a detailed consideration of "Yugo-Slavia's Frontiers," certain needed rectifications being pointed out—such as the case of three German villages which have their fields in Yugo-Slavia whereas they are themselves in Rumania. Opponents of Mr. Baerlein who have written in various

* "The Birth of Yugo-Slavia." By Henry Baerlein. 2 vols. 42s. (Leonard Parsons.)

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journals and reviews are vigorously treated, and will probably not remain silent after reading his replies.

With this quite inadequate summary of a valuable contribution to history we must leave the book, quoting in conclusion a word or two. "Month follows month," says Mr. Baerlein; "the reading public and some of the statesmen of the world begin to recognise that whatever may be the case on other portions of the new map, there is nothing unreal or impossible or artificial about Yugo-Slavia. This State is the result of a national movement, having its origins within and not without the peoples whose destiny it affects." And this, after all, is the only sound basis upon which any map can be revised.

W. L. R.

TAKEN FROM LIFE.*

However much the phrase may have been over-used, there is no other that so accurately describes the seven sketches in this book, therefore in the interests of truth one dares to be shamelessly conventional and say they are human documents. For human documents they are in the most literal, most emphatic sense of the words. They are nakedly, vividly realised records of life as it has been lived by four men and three women, chosen from among the poor in London and in the country—a pedlar, a charwoman, a cabman, a toiling village housewife—average working folk, with the exception of the alien, Franz, who was born in Hungary and had been about the world and so is touched with romance, but a drab and squalid romance too harsh and grim to be anyway alluring. Whether Mr. Beresford's graphically, minutely realistic narratives of these people were written to illustrate Mr. Hoppé's seven fine photographic character studies, or whether the photographs were taken to illustrate the narratives, is of no moment; what matters is that the same story is told in these remarkable photographs as in Mr. Beresford's subdued, explicit prose. He uses no coloured inks; eschews melodrama and extravagances of sentiment; touches in his facts with a quiet irony sometimes, sometimes with a wry, genial humour, and always with a sympathy that is more latent than expressed. It is a book of unimportant biographies, a presentation, as he says, "of certain little pieces of human history"; and they are really only unimportant in the sense that their subjects are so. There is a larger sense in which they are of profound importance, for they represent the lives not of one or two but of millions of our fellow-creatures, and there is the question of our responsibility for the social conditions that produce such lives and make it impossible for them to be better or happier.

Mr. Beresford turns to this question in a concluding essay on "Relatives," which grows naturally out of his character studies, and he sees that the remedy for much that is wrong lies in a readjustment of our social values and the ways in which we train up our children:

"Most of the evils in our great towns to-day," he says, "have arisen as the direct consequence of our adoration of wealth. We have made a god of the rich man, and the tenets of our idol-worshipping religion are being inculcated in every school of the kingdom, day by day."

And he has faith that the younger generation, taught by the war, is moving toward reform in these things. He tells you at the outset that you may skip the final essay, but if you do you will miss something of the significance of a deeply interesting and significant book.

R. H.

CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS.†

Dr. Fosdick has broken away from the form in which he has hitherto cast his message, as in "The Meaning of Prayer" and "The Manhood of the Master," but here is the same orderly thought, clean grasp of essential points in a problem, and leaping illustration which has made him one of the most popular of our religious writers. Whatever be the outcome of the heresy charge now pending against the doctor, it is certain that the conception of the world, of history, of religion and of God here given is in principle the only possible conception for those who in all their other attitudes to life and dealings with the world accept and use the thought forms in use amongst intelligent men born later than 1880. The core of the situation may be thus stated: Are we living in a static or a dynamic world? Are we part of a mechanical or spiritual universe, one that not only *moves* but *lives*? In Bergsonian phrase (the idea, mercifully, did not wait for Bergson though he has made it current coin for us) are we to interpret the world in terms of *becoming* or of *being*? And if it is *becoming*, what is the process and what the goal?

The idea of progress is part of the working alphabet of our day. What is this idea, and is it an automatic progress, and if so, what kind of progress in a world of men and women with developed and developing spiritual values could be automatic? He discusses when and how the idea of progress arose; whether, in a world that is always progressing (if such be granted for the sake of the argument) we shall continue to need religion. He answers that we shall, yea, need more than ever an adequate spiritual interpretation of nature and life and of the entire scheme of things, unless our progress is to be a progress backward. Then he shows that any religion capable of dealing with the issues at stake in such a mobile universe must itself be progressive, dynamic and not static; that Christianity, and the Scriptures themselves, bear witness to a principle of development not only in their history but in their very nature. In a subsequent chapter he deals with the perils inevitably associated with loose thinking about progress and in our judgment splendidly proves that Christianity is manifestly not only capable of dealing with the issues of such progressive life and thought, but has been and is itself the prime cause of such faith. The concluding chapter of this virile statement of the Christian faith is an analysis of the history of the idea of God and an explanation of the inevitable anthropomorphism in the early stages, closing with a statement of the idea of God which is at once true to Christ and acceptable to the mind trained to use the scientific categories of thought in other realms. It is one of the best books we have for the mind which feels it cannot at the same time be scientific and religious, and yet feels it must to be true to itself and the facts of life.

ARTHUR HIRD.

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Page's energy, his anxiety to get something done to render Europe more stable in the year preceding the war,

* "Taken From Life." By J. D. Beresford and E. O. Hoppé. 10s. 6d. (Collins.)

† "Christianity and Progress." By H. E. Fosdick, D.D. 6s. (Nisbet.)

* "The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page." By Burton J. Hendrick. 2 vols. 36s. (Heinemann.)

his hammer-stroke letters to Colonel House, were all amazing; and whatever theme he touched he gave it raciness and life. He was a born letter-writter. And it is in his terrific war-letters that we see the man at his best and finest; his confidential letters and cablegrams to the President, which stand the test of the light of our broadest day; his delightful letters to his family; the letters, also, which exhibit his increasing restlessness at America's attitude; all tend to form a portrait of one whom we can but admire and sympathise with in his exceedingly difficult position. "The sight of an England which he loved bleeding to death in defence of the things in which he most believed was a grief that seemed to be sapping his very life," wrote Mr. Irwin Laughlin, his chief assistant; and the letters corroborate this. The story of his illness and forced retirement is a moving one, and few people will read without a sense of sadness the account of his home-coming, when the *Olympic* raced westward for his life, and he was taken to the South which he loved, only to die—worn out by the heavy work of the war. It is a great story of a great man—and greatly told by one who knew him.

R.

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and there in his descriptions the author touches quite a high level. We wish Mr. Soutar would settle down to a really big theme; he could make a great book if he would give himself a little more time to work out the plot, and did not overload it with too many characters. In "Hornet's Nest" there are one or two rather hoary jests which might have been left out, and a great mystery is hinted at but never explained. "Oh, the little more, and how much it is. . . ."

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" The movements or the policies of the time,"

or

" Brooks brawling past my knees, precipitate,
Have brawled their verve into the marrow of me "—

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Mr. Percy Thorn.

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The really impressive book of this sort invariably displays a reverence for the mysterious and the unknown. There could not be a more practical person than Mr. Zane Grey, with his coolness in emergency, his resource and dash: but all the while he is on the trail, his eyes are open to the beauty and wonder of the world. Lying out in the starlight, he is conscious of the spirit in things. Gazing at a view of a lonely cañon, he thought: " How desolate and grand. The far-away and terrible places of the earth are the most beautiful. Life's little day seems so easy to understand; so pitiful." The photographs, which are many, give a helpful idea of the places reached by our author. There are a good many sporting pictures; three of treed lions. A study of the Flattop Mountain in the chapter on " Colorado Trails " is especially beautiful. The many episodes are told with the exuberance characteristic of the writer. We commend the book particularly to the wistful, but persevering fireside traveller.

APOLLO TO CHRIST. By E. M. Martin. 3s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

The author, who is known by several volumes of prose essays, is a lover of the country and the country town; but beauty for him is constantly tinged with sorrow and regret. Though his rhythms are always strong and easy, his songs never change from the minor key. They are, however, sincere, robust and moving; and not infrequently there is in them a hint of Thomas Hardy, as in this " Song of Ten ":

" It took ten men to do the mowing
About the moors that rock and river part;
It took ten men to do the mowing—
But it only took one to break a heart.

" It took ten men to do the reaping
(The corn grows tall where rock and river part).
It took ten men to do the reaping—
But it only took one to break a heart.

" It took ten men to do the building
That set the wall hard-strong to tame the wave;
It took ten men to do the building—
But it only took one to dig a grave."

LADY PALMERSTON AND HER TIMES. By Mabell Countess of Airlie. In two volumes. 30s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Lady Airlie has provided a very welcome continuation of her former book, " In Whig Society," by the publication of these two further volumes, which are concerned mainly with the correspondence of her great-grandmother,

Emily Countess Cowper, who married as her second husband Lord Palmerston, the Premier. As the daughter of Lady Melbourne, Byron's intimate correspondent, and as the sister of the second Lord Melbourne, Queen Victoria's favourite Minister and husband of Lady Caroline Lamb, it will be realised at once how wide is the sweep of political and social interests contained in even Lady Cowper's family circle, to say nothing of her friendships with such personalities as Madame de Lieven and the Duke of Wellington, and her genius as a great political hostess during the period of her second marriage. Further, much of Lady Cowper's correspondence was with her third brother, Frederick Lamb (created Lord Beauvale in 1839), who was in the Diplomatic Service at Vienna and Munich during the early years of the nineteenth century, and subsequently British Ambassador at Lisbon in 1828, and Vienna in 1831. Consequently foreign interests come into this book also, and domestic interests concerned with the marriages of Lady Cowper's two daughters with, respectively, the philanthropic Earl of Shaftesbury and Viscount Jocelyn (uncle of Roden Noel, the poet). It is pleasant to turn back to the records of those spacious days when the eighteenth century was merging into the nineteenth, and Lady Cowper's letters, with Lady Airlie's illuminating notes, throw many valuable sidelights on the notable events and personalities of the time.

THE COMPLETE OPERA BOOK. By Gustav Kobbe. 25s. (Putnams.)

Nine hundred packed pages explain the word "complete" in the title. In addition to crisp introductions on the different schools of opera and discussions of such general topics as "Why some operas are rarely given," we have an analysis of the stories of the operas, together with 400 leading airs and motives in musical notation. A swift glance at this book before going to the opera ought to considerably enhance one's enjoyment. With its sixty-four portraits of world favourites in famous scenes help to link the years together and recall many a bright hour and vivid joy.

Music.

ANCESTRAL VOICES.*

By MAY BYRON.

Photo by Elliott & Fry **Mr. Cyril Scott.**

When one reflects upon the tenacity of life exhibited by vocal melodies—upon the survival (not always of the fittest) displayed by some of the most venerable compositions—and upon the recent extraordinary recrudescence of interest in Tudor music, one is half inclined towards Schopenhauer's theory that the world may be regarded as embodied music. For assuredly

* "English Ayres, 1598–1612." Transcribed and Edited from the Original Editions by Peter Warlock and Philip Wilson. Vol. I. 5s. (Enoch.)—"British Songs." Arranged and Harmonised by Cyril Scott. "Cherry Ripe," "The Minstrel Boy," "Blythe and Merry was She," "By Yon Bonnie Banks," "All Through the Night," "Comin' Thro' the Rye," "I'll Bid my Heart be Still." 2s. each. (Elkin.)—"When That I was and a Tiny Little Boy." (Short Encore Songs.) Words by Shakespeare. Music by Gerrard Williams. 1s. 6d. (Paxton.)—Songs by Reginald C. Robbins: "Ode to the West Wind." Words by P. B. Shelley. 3s. "La Belle Dame Sans Merci." Words by John Keats. 2s. (Paris: Maurice Senart.)

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XUM

there is something in the fabric of life, in the mind of man, that preserves these melodies alive. It is as though Space and Time were phonographic discs, which retain and record, practically for ever, these archaic ancestral voices.

I am unable to account for the prevalent popularity of the great Elizabethans: unless it be a subconscious revolt against the over-elaboration and vehemently restless harmonisation of to-day's most advanced composers. To me, the magnificent vocal phrases of Byrd, Dowland, Rosseter—all that glorious company—are adorable in their sweeping curve, their breadth begotten of those "spacious times," their perfect adequacy for the singer's needs, their lovely tunefulness and balance. But when their contrapuntal or harmonic treatment is superadded—then, I confess, an effect is produced on me as of biting green apples, or munching green gooseberries. There is a sense of crudity and rawness—and the inevitable major chord concluding a work in a minor key, grates upon one's (probably too sophisticated) ear.

Yet nobody can afford to be without knowledge of these mighty men: and an excellent introduction to some of their most characteristic work may be obtained from "English Ayres," Vol. I, in which Peter Warlock and Philip Wilson have collaborated with admirable result. Here we encounter a number of celebrated names which adorned the period 1598–1612. The lute notation is transcribed, in all its native simplicity, for the pianoforte, and no alteration whatever has been made save in the barring which has been made more even and regular than the original. This, for amateur purposes, is a distinct improvement. Where each "Ayre" has its own peculiar and individual charm, it is not easy to differentiate these songs as regards intrinsic beauty. A special fascination exhales from Campian's "Love me or not"; Rosseter's "When Laura smiles" and "What then is love, but mourning?"; Dowland's "Lady, if you so spite me"; Robert Jones's "My love is neither young nor old"; and the better-known anonymous "Willow, Willow." But if ever there were amplitude of device, it is here: and further volumes may be awaited with pleasant expectation.

The series entitled "British Songs," for whose arrangement and harmonisation Cyril Scott is responsible, is not only an admirable idea in itself, but quite startling in its re-presentment of old friends. Profound as is my appreciation of Cyril Scott, I was hardly prepared for the amazing originality and dexterity here displayed. He has taken such familiar "ancestral voices" as "Cherry Ripe," "The Minstrel Boy," "Blythe, Blythe, and Merry was She," and transmuted them into a new timbre—infused them with a fresh vitality. They glow, prismatic, many-faceted, where before they only emitted a single monochrome light. Or, to vary the metaphor, the melody, in all its native candour, floats and hovers like a seabird above wonderful waves of intricate harmony. Sometimes one is given pause by this harmony—one doesn't quite agree with it. "Come!" one thinks, "this is carrying things *too* far! The air, pure and simple, is being over-dressed with gorgeous garments." Yet, a minute later, the brilliancy, the essential rightness, the audacious skill of the thing, overcome all one's scruples. I should like to comment on these songs at large and at leisure: space, unfortunately, prohibits. But I know of nothing like them. One small omission may be amended, perhaps, in future editions. The *original name* of the air should be given somewhere. "Through the Long Night," for instance, is "Ar hyd y nos" to all Welshmen: "The Minstrel Boy" is "Moreen" in Ireland: and many familiar Scottish airs bear quite different titles from those supplied by Burns when he wrote fresh words for them. This is, of course, a matter of small moment to the singer: but it is important to the student of folk-song.

It was a happy thought to provide a set of "Short Encore Songs," and the one in hand, by Gerrard Williams, is a favourable specimen of just what is wanted. Here the "ancestral voice" is that of the poet: and Mr. Williams has fashioned Shakespeare's words into a daintily delightful ditty. "When that I was and a tiny little boy" ("Twelfth Night"), a bright, gay little morsel, may be warranted to find favour with any audience if taken *presto con fuoco* as indicated. The "twangy" style of the accompaniment, suggestive of a lute, is particularly effective.

The last songs on our list are also the most ambitious: it goes hard to classify them, for Keats and Shelley are scarcely yet to be termed "ancestral" when a mere century divides them from us. "He that aims the sky," says Herbert, "shoots higher far than he that means a tree," and Browning parallels the thought—"A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?" So praise is due to Mr. Reginald Robbins for his valorous attempts, even if they should not be wholly unqualified successes. Both are for bass or baritone; both demand vast skill and sympathy from the interpreter; each is furnished with a difficult and elaborate pianoforte part, which in at least one song implies that it was initially written for the orchestra. An ordinary vocalist, an average accompanist, will quail before Mr. Robbins's frenzied vagaries of notation, which involve, more than once, changes of key-signature (wholly unnecessary to my mind) in the course of a single bar. The flats and sharps perform a sort of witch-dance before one's bewildered eyes. Yet I believe that, could one hear these pieces rendered by finely competent executants, one would be enormously impressed by them. The setting of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is really a scena rather than a song. The accent jars upon one often. That a long vowel with two sound-carrying consonants, such as "Wind" in bar 3, should be allotted a miserable semiquaver, after the foregoing prolonged syllables, is all but ridiculous. It can be pardoned for the sake of the strong poetic feeling which pervades the whole: yet I wonder if Mr. Robbins meant to pronounce the word "wĭnd," short, in bar 3, and "wīnd," to rhyme with "behind," in the finale? His other composition, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," is much more austere in character; the force and passion of the West Wind are replaced by a stagnant forlorn chilliness, which well reflects the spirit of Keats's immortal lyric. Nevertheless, the magic of the latter has somewhat evaporated in the course of setting it: and the one-syllable-to-one-note method, though probably intentional, becomes wearisome by reiteration. The text is that of the earlier version, known to few: such variations as "knight-at-arms" and "kisses four" strike one strangely: and "gloam" is a misprint for "gloom." To conclude and reiterate, it is not every baritone who will be able to tackle Mr. Robbins's voice-part, nor every pianist who will care to cope with his pianoforte score. But those who dare essay the adventure will be undoubtedly astonished and rewarded.

NOTES ON NEW MUSIC.

SIX PIANOFORTE STUDIES FOR THE LEFT HAND. By M. Moszkowski. (Enoch.)

Excellent and essential studies for all pianists with ambitions.

THERE'S A RAY OF SUNSHINE HIDING. By Cecil Harrington. **OFT IN THE TWILIGHT.** By Arthur F. Tate. (Cary.)

These two songs are bracketed together because, although by different composers, they are so much of the same type that they remind one irresistibly of twins. Songs of sentiment, the words and music of both are on somewhat hackneyed lines.

HIAWATHA'S MELODY OF LOVE. By Geo. W. Meyer. (Feldman.)

A "catchy" though not very original waltz.

ALBUM FOR THE YOUNG. Morning Song. March. By C. Gurlitt. (Augener.)

Very short, full of character and easy to play, these two pieces should appeal to young players.

EAST OF SUEZ. Music by Eugene Goossens. (Chester,)

This fascinating suite from "East of Suez" comprises "the Overture, the incidental music to Scene 1 and three out of the six entr'actes specially written for the production." Many who have been to see the play will be anxious to get this suite; to them it needs no recommending; but to those who have not yet heard Mr. Goossens's wonderful and characteristic Chinese music we would say, Do not miss this book. The themes of the music are based on old Chinese melodies.

SOUTHERN REFRAINS. By Percy Elliott. (Schott.)

One is always sure of something tuneful when Mr. Percy Elliott's name is on the cover. "Southern Refrains" contains four "episodes"—a delightful quartet.

HOW TO USE A PLAYER-PIANO. By Harry Ellingham. 6s. net. (Grant Richards.)

Pianolas are less common than gramophones; but they are sufficiently numerous. Unfortunately many of them are mistaken for sewing-machines. The player sits down, pumps monotonously at the pedals, and the machine does the rest. It is a minority of players who may be said to play. And yet a pianola can be played as exquisitely as a piano, if it is rightly used. Mr. Ellingham's volume—small enough to be really useful and unintimidating—will teach the reader how to get the best out of his instrument. Some of it is historical (and instructive), but the major part is practical, and the reader who takes the trouble to carry out the excellent lessons here given will be soon on the road to real artistic playing. The secret of pianola-playing is simply the secret of good singing—breath-control. The pianola is a piano with lungs and tubes. Learn how to control its breathing, and it will sing very wonderfully. Plough away rigidly at its pedals, and you might as well try to get music out of a foot-pump. Read Mr. Ellingham's volume and your neighbours will love you.

MINIATURE ESSAYS. Granville Bantock; Joseph Jongen. 6d. each. (Chester.)

These are excellent critical studies, printed in English and French, containing an estimate of each composer with a list of his writings, together with a portrait and facsimile page of score. The note of criticism is quite modern, and if the praise seems at time excessive, we pardon it as a good fault. Praise is real food and refreshment to the living man, and we should not reserve it solely for the dead. Messrs. Chester should produce many more of these delightful booklets.

A RUSSIAN SINGER.

In setting out to captivate an audience of which the majority are ignorant of the language used, a singer is handicapped unless the voice is of phenomenal appeal. Either the listener must watch the book of words to the exclusion of the singer, or scan the translations for an outline and leave the performance to fill in the colours. Mme. Valetina Aksarova, in her second evening of Russian songs at the Æolian Hall, sang chiefly in Russian, and I, preferring the outline method, was left at the end of the first group with no very definite impression. The effect was rather of monochrome. Mme. Aksarova has a graceful and a soprano voice uniformly pleasing in its lower three-quarters. The top quarter is less dependable. There was an occasional lack of ease and sure intonation; possibly, since she improved in both respects, the result of a slight cold. Her technique, apart from a rather shallow method of breathing which results in the more strenuous passages in a noisy intake and a legato which is adequate but not distinguished, is good. The latter groups came off better and showed that Mme. Aksarova is at her best in songs either quietly reflective or vivacious. In more strongly sustained or dramatic passages she is less convincing.

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She was happiest in Rachmaninoff's "Loneliness," Rimsky Korsakoff's "Sur les collines de Georgie," and, particularly, in the peasant girl's folk-song-like tune in a duet from that composer's "Snowflakes," in which she was joined by M. Adolph Riabim. Another success was Vassilenko's "Tarr," which was repeated. Her other songs occasionally lacked climax and left the listener feeling that something had been missed, the something that is the difference between a pleasant rendering and the sort of real interpretation which makes of the oldest song a new thing, an inspired improvisation.

In brief, on a first hearing Mme. Aksarova seems to be a singer well equipped; good, if not exciting, to hear; with distinct graces and a less distinct versatility in projecting herself into various types of songs. Her next concert could be strengthened by cutting out unpunctuality and waits, and by closing the doors during the first group. Impossible to build an atmosphere which is dissipated at the end of each song by late-comers apparently bent on gentle exercise. The accompaniments were played by M. Roger Jalowicz.

R. B.

The Drama.

JAMES AGATE AND DRAMATIC CRITICISM.

BY GRAHAM SUTTON.

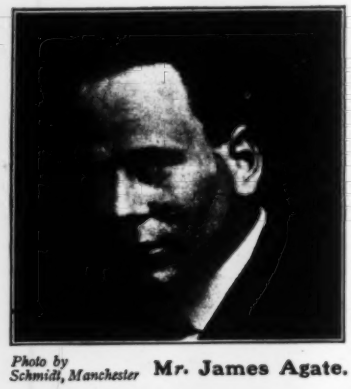


Photo by Schmidt, Manchester **Mr. James Agate.**

DRAMATIC criticism is a perilous game. We live on a kind of double-barrelled volcano which breaks out from time to time in simple or compound eruption. The cry goes up: "What should such fellows do crawling between earth and heaven?" —more accurately between "gods" and "stars"; for both these delight to attack us. Our position down there in the stalls is curiously symbolic. We are between two fires, and withering volleys of anti-critical criticism rake us from front and rear.

The result is painfully obvious. Instead of resolving to live dangerously, modern criticism takes for its inglorious motto "Safety First," and at once falls into two classes—the erudite-indifferent and the news-report. The erudite-indifferent man safeguards himself by brilliant irrelevance, using the play as a clothes-line to hang out his own extraneous learning. The news-reporter, equally indifferent but of less brilliant parts, lacks even the courage of irrelevance. Protesting feebly that he must write for the man in the street (that half-educated fellow who has long been notorious for knowing as much as the experts) he cuts his coat according to the threadbare mode; he confines himself to a few vague generalities; he writes out (O last resort of pusillanimity!) a summary of the story and concludes with four barren lines of actors' names. He is a plot-retailer, an actors' reference book; a barmecide host by whom the menu is set forth in detail and the guests sent empty away. Nor even so does he 'scape whipping. The actors taunt him with incompetence, with not daring to commit himself to individual analysis whether in praise or blame; he cannot discriminate, they say, between good lines and good acting, nor distinguish the error of some poor devil of a mummer from that of the producer who compels him to misread his part. Meanwhile the public, despairing of genuine dramatic criticism in either case, turn back to his erudite-indifferent colleague as being at any rate the more entertaining. And thus that old whirligig of *The Times* brings in his revenges.

A sad state of things, but fortunately not universal. One paper at least, the *Saturday Review*, has a tradition of dramatic criticism which a bold writer alone would care to challenge. Eighteen months ago the challenger arrived—James Agate, ex-critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, now swelling magnificently into the old Shavian and Beerbohmian chair. At the time of his appointment he had three books to his credit: "L. of C." (Lines of Communication), his own favourite; "Buzz Buzz!" dramatic essays; and "Responsibility," a novel embracing a wider world than that of Manchester (though hung on that city), and written during a long sojourn in southern France. This year "Alarums and Excursions" followed; dramatic essays again, with two short canters on his other hobbies—ponies and pugilists. News of a volume of reprinted "Saturday" articles, to be published in February by Jonathan Cape, saves one the pleasant trouble of hoarding the originals from week to week.

Mr. Agate has made full confession of his creed; explicitly in "Alarums and Excursions," implicitly in the most intimate of all his essays—that one entitled "The Actor as Charlatan" in "Buzz Buzz!" For my own part I like his practice more than his theory. But this is personal bias; and lest it should lead me to misrepresent him, I sallied out to confirm my impression of his critical faith, and to provoke him to an argument in which I foresaw no quarter granted to my own. By the same token I approached the subject on its less controversial side, with some remark about the publicity given nowadays to actors' opinions.

"That which concerns itself with the actor's thoughts," Mr. Agate answered, "is not criticism. Even where the actor's own part is concerned, his mental processes are wholly irrelevant. It is not he who 'interprets,' but the spectator; and the actor is probably always aiming at some effect other than that which the spectator receives. But the effect—the method and mechanics—are all; the aim and theory, nothing!"

"You mean that the actor's temperament outweighs his brains? Most honest actors would agree."

"Surely. No man who has been to Oxford is the better able to say 'The carriage waits.' A costermonger who has pushed a barrow with temperament can make a shot at Othello. Said an old farmer to me once, 'Coronations is muck!' Brains on the stage is rubbish. Then let the actor stick to his nightly buskin; let the villa doors be shut upon him, that he may play the interpreter nowhere but in his own house. So with the critic in turn; let *him* stick to his stall——"

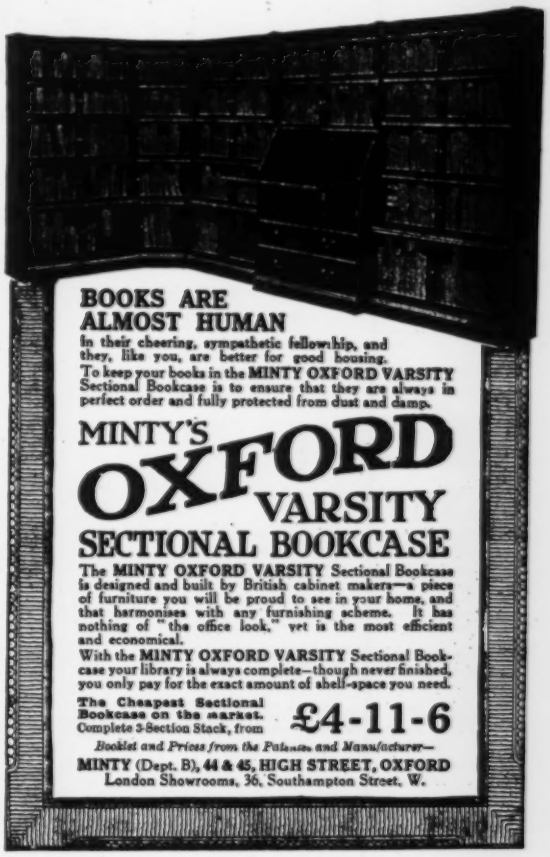
"Now for it!" I thought. Aloud I ventured: "But surely the ex-actor is the best judge of plays?" And the storm burst.

"Above all," said Mr. Agate emphatically, "the critic of plays must *never* have been an actor! The actor looks upon a performance not as a representation of life, but as a piece of jugglery with powder and paint——"

MYSELF (*rather dashed*): "You will admit at any rate that the actor is the best judge of acting?"

AGATE: "Yes, there he is on firmer ground; but not firm enough. If a performance is a clever piece of business on the part of the actor, his colleague who looks on will not care if it contradict, impede or thwart the current of the play. Knowledge of the technique of acting is valuable to the critic only in awarding marks to actors and placing them in order of merit. The important thing is the play—what play the critic enjoys and how he enjoys it. To find this, to interpret that *wonder* which is the soul of the theatre, he should refer the play to his susceptibilities with as little intervention of the actor as possible. All else is lumber and handicap."

Well, there it is! I have made Mr. Agate speak out for himself because I am frankly biased, my own past inclining me inevitably to the technical mode. I admire his work, this side idolatry, as much as anyone. And yet his theory, though it is more generous to critic and public respectively than the actor's and critic's arguments which I have already quoted, does not wholly convince me. For I still hold fanatically that the critic is lost without technical equipment; I suspect Mr. Agate, for all his modest protestations of "complete detachment," of thinking likewise; and I find in his argument this serious flaw: that he himself has obviously so much better an equipment than he is ready to advocate. When I suggested something of the kind, he said: "Not at all! One should write simply as a literary artist." Quite so; the theory works in his own case. But like all artists' working theories, it fits one case only. Mere artistry is too vague a critical outfit; it smacks too much of Arnold's "beautiful but ineffectual angel, beating in the void its luminous wings in vain." The point is that Mr. Agate's artistry, whether he knows it or not, is of a highly specialised kind. Consider his critical godfathers. First, Lamb and the more critical, less rapturous Hazlitt; second, forming a link between these and himself, that great virtuoso, C. E. Montague. Those elder critics had two magical virtues—a general love of the theatre and a particular susceptibility to the individual artist. So Mr. Montague; so Mr. Agate in turn. Lamb's gusto for the individual needs no comment here; but if you pass from Munden or Dicky Suett, via the "Good Acting" chapter of Montague's "Dramatic Values,"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London School of Journalism

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THE Directors of the London School of Journalism have now the pleasure to announce the name of the winner of the annual cash prize of £50 kindly offered by the proprietors of the "DAILY MIRROR." Of many hundred contributions submitted by students of the School, the Editor of the "DAILY MIRROR" has selected that of

Mrs. KATHLEEN RICE,
The Warren, Devonshire Road,
Harpenden,

to whom, in consequence, the prize is now awarded. The winning article appeared in the "DAILY MIRROR" of January 4th. The Directors are privileged to add that, in the opinion of the Examiner, the articles submitted attained a high standard of excellence. They would mention that all students are eligible for this competition. For Prospectus and particulars of the School's Courses apply to:—

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